# A BOOK OF NOBLE WOMEN

'Wherefore, my Book, let no discouragement
Hinder thy travels. Behold, thou art sent
To Friends, not foes; to Friends that will give place
To thee, thy Pilgrims, and thy words embrace.

. . . . . .

Go then, my little Book and shew to all
That entertain, and bid thee welcome shall,
What thou shalt keep close, shut up from the rest,
And wish what thou shalt shew them may be blest
To them for good, may make them chuse to be
Pilgrims, better by far, than thee or me.'

JOHN BUNYAN.

SANTA CATHERINE OF SIENA
FRANCESCO VANNI

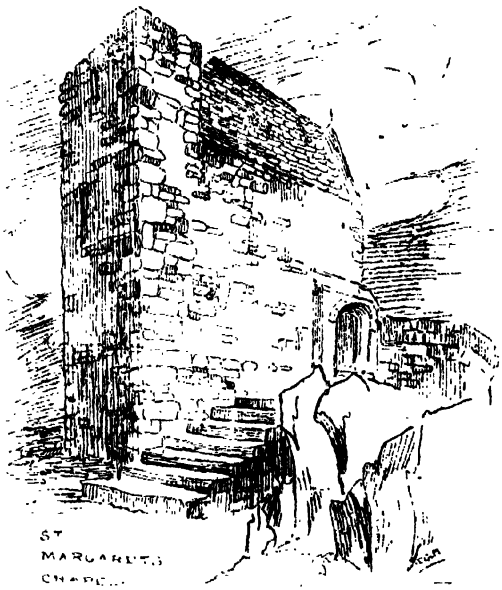
Barid baran Mukerji.
1 College Row, Calcutta

# A BOOK OF NOBLE WOMEN

BY

C. C. CAIRNS

WITH SEVEN PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAITS

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AND EDINBURGH

TO

MY SISTERS

David Baron Mukerji
1 College Row, Calcutta

# PREFACE

THE twelve sketches which follow do not profess to set forth their subjects in any new or original light. The narratives are retold from *Lives* and other sources already before the world, as a tribute to noble women passed away, as well as for the benefit of those readers who may desire to add to a familiar name an outline of story. It is the writer's fault if the reader fails to discern the thread of purpose which unites the diverse histories.

While such a book as this must necessarily be much indebted to the labours of other people, I have taken pains to select and compare facts, and to tell each story from my own point of view, as far as that is possible in the space allotted. To the authors and publishers who have generously given permission to make use of copyright works, by quotation or otherwise, I have pleasure in acknowledging my obligations, and in offering them my thanks. I especially desire to mention with gratitude the courtesy of Mr. John Murray and of Canon Scott Holland with regard to the *Life of Jenny Lind*. I owe the same thanks to Messrs. Constable, and to Mrs. Raikes, author of *Dorothea Beale of Cheltenham;* to Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston and Co. (Miss Alcott's publishers), who have allowed me to

give extracts from her diaries and letters; to Miss Maxwell Moffat, from whose translations of letters, etc., in her work on Queen Louisa of Prussia I have borrowed; and to Messrs. Methuen for their permission in this case, and in that of another book, *Catherine of Siena and Her Times.* Among other books consulted I would like to name Miss Warrender's *Marchmont and the Humes of Polwarth,* and the *Life of Mrs. Booth* by Mr. Booth-Tucker. If I have failed in acknowledging any debt, I hope that the apology which I now offer will be accepted.

I have pleasure in thanking her Grace the Duchess of Sutherland for leave given to reproduce the portrait of Queen Louisa by Madame Vigée le Brun, from the original in Dunrobin Castle.

C. C. C.

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David Baron Mookerji.
College Road, Calcutta.

# A BOOK OF NOBLE WOMEN

## SAINT MARGARET, QUEEN OF SCOTLAND

'MANY, as we read, have got their name from a quality of their mind. The same thing was true of this virtuous woman, for the fairness which was foreshadowed in her name was eclipsed by the surpassing beauty of her soul. . . . She was called Margaret (the Pearl), and indeed she showed herself to be a pearl, to you, to me, to all of us.'

Thus wrote Bishop Turgot of St. Andrews, who was her friend and her biographer; the thousands of Margarets who bear her name to-day remind us how deeply she stamped herself on the imagination of Scotland.

Her little chapel or oratory, within the walls of Edinburgh Castle, is perhaps the oldest thing in the city. It stands there, a little, old, rough building—rooted, as it were, in the living rock on which it was built more than eight hundred years ago; and from the doorway you look over the Castle ramparts, and across the busy modern city, to the blue Firth of Forth, and the long low shores of Fife; there, almost within eyesight, you can follow from point to point the scenes of Margaret's history, from the hour when she landed, a wayworn homeless princess, at St. Margaret's Hope

(or Bay), named after her—on to Dunfermline—and the Queen's Ferry, where she must have made many a passage between Edinburgh and Dunfermline to and fro. The view was very different then, for, northward from the Castle, all was lake and swamp, with occasional ridges of dry ground. One such ridge, running west and northward by the base of Corstorphine Hill, led to the ferry on the Forth where travellers crossed. Many a band, pilgrims, priests, or soldiers (merchants were few), all savage and strange to our eyes, must have passed where now the Forth Bridge flings its colossal iron spiderwork against the sky.

It was autumn of the year 1068 (or thereabouts, as historians tell us), and Malcolm Ceannmore—the king with the Great Head—reigned in Scotland. The times were troublous, for although Malcolm had succeeded in crushing out rivals in Scotland, the conquest of England by William of Normandy affected his fortunes also. William had slain Harold in the battle of Hastings, 1066, and had, after desperate fighting in the north of England, driven Edgar the Atheling, grandson of Edmund Ironside, out of the country, with kith and kin, as hunted fugitives. Edgar's mother was the Princess Agatha, sister of the Queen of Hungary; and at Wearmouth, we are told, he embarked, with the intention of taking refuge at the Hungarian Court: with him were his mother and his sisters Margaret and Christina, and several of the English nobles who had fought with him against William. The time was October, the weather threatening and stormy, and a gale blew from the south-west.

Northward, in Scotland, Malcolm sat in the king's chair in his palace at Dunfermline, and brooded angrily

over the news from England—the subjugation of Northumbria, which brought the Conqueror close to his own border. Malcolm was a man of his time, full of 'the rough humour of the kings of old,' passionate and revengeful. He knew no arts, save those of hunting and of war, and the fierce justice which a man learns in these schools. He could neither read nor write, but he could speak fluently in three languages—Gaelic, his mother-tongue; English, probably acquired at the court of Edward the Confessor, where he had been sheltered as an exile in his youth; and Latin, learned from the priests.

Thus he sat and brooded, and cursed the Norman—while the storm grew, and the gusts of wind tore down the wide chimney and blew the smoke into the king's eyes, and the light ashes of wood and peat flew all over the hall. The night fell, and with the darkness there came a knocking and voices of messengers.

A ship was in the haven . . . they said . . . an English ship. A noble company was on board, thanes and lords, and at their head the Atheling Edgar that should have been King of England, and with him the princesses, his mother and his sisters. They were in grievous straits with sea-weariness and cold, and craved the hospitality of the king.

It was readily given. Indeed, another chronicler tells us that the exiles came to Scotland at the express invitation of Malcolm. The king himself hastened to meet and welcome the refugees. And these beautiful, forlorn women needed no advocate to plead their claims; all writers testify to the charms and loveliness of Margaret especially. She was then about twenty, and we can imagine the fair-haired, blue-eyed, English girl, upright and tall in figure, with that sweet serene

dignity which comes from self-discipline. For Bishop Turgot says, 'While Margaret was yet in the flower of youth, she began to lead a very strict life, to love God above all things, to employ herself in the study of the Divine writings.' Her understanding was keen, her memory good, and she had 'a ready flow of graceful language.'

We are not surprised, then, to read that in the following spring she was married to Malcolm, 'by the appointment of God, and rather in obedience to the will of her friends than her own.' The marriage took place at Easter time in Dunfermline, where afterwards Margaret built a noble church in honour of the Holy Trinity on the site of the present Dunfermline Abbey. Apparently Margaret's brother Edgar gave his consent to the marriage rather unwillingly, but Malcolm would not be withstood. 'He dealt with her brother till he said yea, for in truth he durst not say otherwise, seeing they had come into Malcolm's power.' Margaret herself had always desired to embrace the Religious Life, the refuge of so many in her day. Within the cloister there was shelter and peace, safety from violence in a time when, in the world outside, no one was safe: there was art, embroidery, and music; the care of the sick; the presence and love of little children were not wanting, for all the education of the time was supplied by the convents; and many young girls grew up from childhood in the care of the nuns, whom they loved like their true mothers. Such a life, dedicated to God, but not stripped bare of human interest and fellowship, was full of attraction for the Princess Margaret, and it would have been strange if she had not hesitated, when she was asked—or perhaps commanded—to commit herself to the care of this half-barbarous,

northern king, whose speech was unfamiliar to her, and whose court was rude and uncivilised.

'It was' (says Mr. Freeman) 'a good day for Malcolm and for Scotland when Margaret was persuaded or constrained to so change the easy self-dedication of the cloister for the harder task of doing her duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call her.' Whatever unwillingness she may at first have felt, there is no doubt that a deep and pure affection governed all her relations with her husband, while she was guided in her royal duties by a constant sense of her responsibility to God, Whose voice had bidden her to them. Like Rebekah, she recognised her destiny, and went forward without faltering to fulfil it.

> 'What girl
> Now reads in her bosom as clear?
>
> . . . . .
>
> Who guards in her breast
> As deep, as pellucid a spring
> Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?'

On his side, Malcolm loved her with the humble enduring devotion of a husband who regards his wife as a being made of finer clay than himself. He looked upon her as 'the starre which providence made use of to send down good influences by.' We can see her moving by his side, a gracious figure, young, beautiful and devout, with a gentleness of manner that veiled determined purpose and strong will. We shall see how these qualities showed themselves in the influence she exerted over her husband, and all those with whom she came in contact; and especially in her dealings, later, with the ecclesiastics of the ancient Celtic Church.

But first, like any other bride, she set herself to

remodel and improve her husband's household and manner of living, and change a *ménage*, which probably resembled that of a hunter's camp within a fort, to something more befitting the palace of a king. She 'arranged that persons of a higher position should be appointed for the king's service, a large number of whom were to accompany him in state whenever he either walked or rode abroad. This body was brought to such discipline that, wherever they came, none of them was suffered to take anything from any one, nor did they dare in any way to oppress or injure country people, or the poor. Further, she introduced so much state into the royal palace, that not only was it brightened by the many colours of the apparel worn in it, but the whole dwelling blazed with gold and silver; the vessels employed for serving the food and drink to the king and nobles of the realm were of gold and silver, or were, at least,' adds the conscientious chronicler, 'gilt and plated.'

The queen's taste and example introduced changes in dress, and encouraged trade, as we read 'it was due to her that the merchants who came by land and sea from different countries brought along with them different kinds of precious wares which until then were unknown in Scotland. And it was at her instigation that the natives of Scotland purchased from these traders clothing of various colours, with ornaments to wear; so that from this period, through her suggestion, new costumes of different fashions were adopted, the elegance of which made the wearers appear like a new race of beings.' Thus she 'contributed no little glory and grace to the entire nobility of the realm and their retainers.'

'All this the queen did, not because the honours of

the world delighted her, but because duty compelled her to discharge what the kingly dignity required. For even as she walked in state, robed in royal splendour, she, like another Esther, in her heart trod all these trappings under foot, and bade herself remember that beneath the gold and gems lay only dust and ashes. In short, in her exalted dignity she was always especially watchful to preserve humility. It was easy for her to repress all vain glory arising from worldly splendour, since her soul never forgot how transitory is this frail life. She always bore in mind the text which describes our condition in this our unstable humanity: "Man, born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many miseries. Who cometh forth as a flower, and is destroyed, and fleeth as a shadow, and never continueth in the same state."'

No passage from Holy Scripture could have applied more fitly to that time, for the life of most men was indeed short and 'filled with many miseries.' The insecurity, the licentiousness, the callousness to cruelties practised and endured, were beyond what we can nowadays even imagine. With all, from the king downward, Might was Right, and it was only by the weight of the strong hand that Malcolm maintained his rule as king in Scotland. South of the Tweed from time to time he had made raids, plundering, killing, and burning: of the wretched survivors, those whose age made them useful were seized and driven in chains by the pitiless soldiers to a life of slavery. The country was filled with them, so that, we are told, there was not a village in Scotland, not a house nor humble cottage, that was not served by an English thrall. Naturally the queen's thoughts turned in pity to these poor folk, akin to her in race, and she restored count-

less numbers of them to liberty by paying their ransom money. And, as probably it would have been beyond her powers to have freed them all, she sent secret messengers through the provinces of Scotland to 'ascertain what captives were oppressed with the most cruel bondage, and treated with the greatest inhumanity . . . then, commiserating them from the bottom of her heart, she took care to send them speedy help, paid their ransom, and set them at liberty forthwith.'

When we think of the significance of such acts of mercy in that dark and cruel time—especially as they appeared to those unhappy ones across whose miserable days they flashed a ray of hope—we can understand how 'the Blessed Margaret's' name, and her gentle strong personality, survived the darkness of the Middle Ages, and still live in the minds and affection of men.

Her influence over her husband grew with the years. There is a story, not told in the bishop's biography, of how an enemy tried to poison the king's mind against her. Malcolm was warned to mark his queen's frequent absences, her secret withdrawals to solitary places; there must be a lover, with whom she had made assignations. The king, furious and miserable, had not long to wait. He saw her, wrapped in a cloak with her hood drawn over her face, steal away by a winding path through the wood. He followed, till he saw her enter a cave or grotto, and soon the sound of a voice made him sure that she was not alone. He crept nearer, but in a few minutes he fell on his knees in shame and relief, for the pleading voice he heard was Margaret's own, poured out in prayer for her husband and for his people. This cave or oratory is still remembered, and shown at Dunfermline as Saint Margaret's Cave. It was an old practice among

Scottish saints to resort to such places for secret devotion, a custom which was continued by pious people down to our own day.

After this, King Malcolm showed himself more than ever ready to put himself under the influence and guidance of his wife in spiritual matters as well as in affairs of state. 'By the help of God she made him most attentive to the works of justice, mercy, almsgiving, and other virtues. From her he learnt how to keep the vigils of the night in constant prayer; she instructed him by her exhortation and example how to pray to God. . . . I was astonished, I confess, at this great miracle of God's mercy, when I perceived in the king such a steady earnestness in his devotion. . . . There was in him a sort of dread of offending one whose life was so venerable; for he could not but perceive from her conduct that Christ dwelt within her; nay more, he readily obeyed her wishes and prudent counsels in all things. Whatever she refused, he refused also; whatever pleased her, he also loved for the love of her. Hence it was that, although he could not read, he would turn over and examine books which she used either for her devotions or her study; and whenever he heard her express special liking for a particular book, he also would look at it with special interest, kissing it, and often taking it into his hands. Sometimes he sent for a worker in precious metals, whom he commanded to ornament that volume with gold and gems, and when the work was finished the king himself used to carry the book to the queen, as a loving proof of his devotion.'

Surely there are few pictures in history more beautiful than this.

Besides the powers of judgment and character which she possessed, Queen Margaret's learning helped to

give her high place and authority in the kingdom. In those days priests took the place of the diplomats and statesmen of our own time, very much because they and they alone had the learning necessary for the management of affairs. The sword was mightier than the pen, but the pen could not be dispensed with altogether; and it behoved kings and war-lords, who could neither read nor write, to have near them confidants and councillors who were skilled in argument and persuasion, and who could commit to writing the spoken word. At such councils Queen Margaret shone, for we read again and again of her powers of intellect and expression, 'her strong and conquering eloquence.' She must have shared with the king the business of administering justice, for Bishop Turgot expressly tells us how he used to admire her serenity and her devotion to the study of God's Word 'amidst the distractions of lawsuits, and the countless cares of state.'

This good man (who afterwards wrote the short *Life* which tells us all we know definitely about Margaret) was her most intimate friend and spiritual adviser—her Confessor or 'Soul-friend' as the old Gaelic expression is.

The ancient Celtic Church, to which every true Scots man or woman looks back with veneration, had at this time fallen into a sort of decay. It grieved the pious and order-loving Margaret to hear of neglected churches and ordinances unobserved. Accordingly, with the help and advice of her old friend Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury (who is said to have taught her when she was a young girl, at the Court of Edward the Confessor), she summoned a council where Culdees and others representing the Church in Scotland met the brethren sent from the Church of the South by

Lanfranc. Apparently Queen Margaret presided, while the king himself was present 'as an assessor and chief actor, being fully prepared both to say and do whatever she might direct in the matter at issue. And as he knew the English language quite as well as his own (Gaelic), he was in this council a very exact interpreter on either side.'

Five points were argued: the number of days to be kept in the Lenten Fast; the duty of communicating at Easter; the rites followed in celebrating Mass; the keeping of the Lord's Day with reverence; and the forbidding of marriages within the prohibited degrees. We are given a full account of the queen's speeches at this council; after 'premising that all who serve one God in one faith along with the Catholic Church ought not to vary from that church by new or far-fetched usages,' her further arguments were based almost entirely on the Holy Writings in which she was so well versed. If Scotsmen then were at all like the Scotsmen of a later generation, Queen Margaret showed her wisdom in so founding her appeal and 'nailing it with Scripture.' The almost superstitious awe which still fences the Lord's Table from many devout souls in the Gaelic-speaking Highlands has its roots very deep, for Queen Margaret's delegates replied to her protest against the neglect of communicating in the very words that are still put forward—'We fear to approach that mystery, lest we eat and drink judgment to ourselves.'

It is curious, too, to think that Scotland (where, I suppose, the Sabbath is still more strictly kept than in any other country in the world) owes its stern regard for the day, in the first instance, to this English queen. When she discussed the point in council, the Culdees

made no defence, for 'the arguments of the queen were unanswerable; and from this time forward, those prudent men paid such respect to her earnestness, that no one dared on these days either to carry any burden himself, or to compel another to do so.'

The result of this council was the gradual unification of the Celtic Church with the Church of Canterbury and Rome. Whatever political reasons may have helped in furthering this, the movement gained all that was real and living in impulse from Margaret's deep and spiritual piety, and shining personal example. The dream of political unity—Celt, Saxon and Norman all in one—took more than five hundred years to realise, but in little more than a life-time the ancient Scottish Church was absorbed into the greater Communion of the South, and the name and order of the Culdees disappear from the records and charters of the time.

Behind this engrossing 'public' life which Margaret led, heavy with great affairs of Church and State, and with powers of life and death in her hands, such as nowadays are committed to no single human being, there lay withdrawn a twofold life—that of the woman and the mother, of which we can catch but a few glimpses—and, still deeper hidden, though revealed in fasts and austerities and outward observances—the source and spring whence flowed all her power, the 'life that was hid with Christ in God.'

She practised religion according to the forms of her time, and if some of her acts of charity seem to us mechanical, and her austerities irrational, nothing could be more real than the devotion which prompted these acts. 'In church no one was so silent and composed as she; no one so wrapt in prayer. Whilst she was in the house of God, she would never speak of worldly

matters, or do anything which savoured of the earth; she was there simply to pray. . . . Only her body was then below, her spirit was near to God, for in the purity of her prayer she sought nothing but God, and the things which are God's. As for her fasting, I will say this alone, that the strictness of her abstinence brought upon her a very severe infirmity.' 'To these two excellent gifts of prayer and abstinence she joined the gift of mercy. For what could be more compassionate than her heart? Who could be more gentle than she towards the necessitous? Not only would she have given to the poor all that she possessed; but if she could have done so she would have given her very self away. She was poorer than any of her paupers; for even they, while they had nothing, wished to have something; while all her anxiety was to strip herself of what she had. When she went out of doors, either on foot or on horseback, crowds of poor people, orphans and widows, flocked to her as they would have done to a most loving mother, and none of them left her without being comforted. But when she had distributed all she had brought with her for the benefit of the needy, the rich who accompanied her, or her own attendants, used to hand to her their garments, or anything else they happened to have by them at the time, that she might give them to those who were in want; for she was anxious that none should go away in distress. Nor were her attendants at all offended, nay rather, each strove who should first offer her what he had, since he knew for certain that she would pay it back twofold. Now and then she helped herself to something or other out of the king's private property, it mattered not what it was, to give to a poor person; and this pious plundering the king always took plea-

santly and in good part. It was his custom to offer certain coins of gold upon Maundy Thursday and at High Mass, some of which coins the queen often devoutly pillaged, and bestowed on the beggar who was petitioning her for help. Although the king was fully aware of the theft, he generally pretended to know nothing of it, and felt much amused by it. Now and then he caught the queen in the very act, with the money in her hand, and laughingly threatened that he would have her arrested, tried, and found guilty. Nor was it towards the poor of her own nation only that she exhibited the abundance of her cheerful and open-hearted charity; but those persons who came from almost every other nation, drawn by the report of her liberality, were the partakers of her bounty.'

She kept the fasts of the Church very strictly; during Lent it was her habit, after a short sleep, to spend much of the night in solitary prayer in the church adjoining the palace. After this, before she rested, 'returning to her chamber, along with the king himself, she washed the feet of six poor persons; and used to give them something wherewithal to relieve their poverty.' In the morning, before she had broken her fast, she again waited upon some hundreds of poor people gathered into the royal hall, whom the king and queen with their own hands served with food and drink. 'Not until after she had devoutly waited upon Christ, in the person of these His poor, was it her habit to refresh her own feeble body.' Her meals were sparing; 'she seemed rather to taste her food than to take it.' The most attractive story of all her charities is that which describes her gathering little destitute orphans to her, taking them one by one on her knee, and feeding them with soft dainty food specially pre-

pared for them—letting them eat out of her own spoon, the most motherly act of all.

If to our modern notions there is something artificial and spectacular about this ceremonious charity—especially when we read of the twenty-four poor people who formed part of the queen's permanent retinue, so that the flow of her benevolence should never be checked for want of an object—if we think thus, we forget the times, and the lessons men needed then to learn. There was everywhere an extraordinary hardness and indifference to the misery of human suffering. The poor were trodden under foot. Christ indeed had come, but men had not learnt to be merciful. The example of Margaret, and her dramatic acts of benevolence, performed, as we know, in all humble sincerity, were like a great object-lesson, or a lighted picture in a dark hall, appealing to the imagination and the heart in a way which could escape no man.

We would gladly know more of Margaret in her relations to her own family of children. She had six sons and two daughters, Edith and Mary. Three of her sons—Edgar, Alexander and David—were destined to sit on the throne of Scotland. The biographer who tells us about her acts of private devotion, and her public charities, gives only a short page to her private life. We know that the queen ordered the bringing up of her children with the same earnest care which she gave to other duties. She herself taught them religion, enforcing her lessons by the deep sincerity of her own example. We are expressly told how well these royal children were taught to behave in church. At that part of the service when the king and queen rose from their places, and advanced to the altar, or entrance of the chancel, to make their offering, the

children paced after them in a row, walking decorously according to the order of their birth, and *never* were the younger seen to push past or precede their elders, as they all in turn reverently laid down their offerings. Edith, afterwards called Matilda, and Mary were still young when they were sent to Romsey in England, to be brought up in the care of their aunt Christina, who was abbess there.[1]

From the hour spent with her children Queen Margaret would pass to her embroidery chamber, where her women sat at work,

> 'Into the fine cloth white like flame,
> Weaving the golden thread.'

The rich and beautiful pieces they wrought were chiefly for the service of the Church: they made stoles and chasubles and vestments of all sorts, besides altar-cloths and other things for the adorning of the house of God. English ladies were at that time famous for the splendid embroidery laid with solid gold wire or thread, known as 'English work.' The persons in charge of Queen Margaret's embroidery-room were nobly-born ladies, grave and dignified in demeanour, who were specially chosen as being worthy of such service. In obedience to the queen's orders they did not receive any idle visitors, such as the gallant squires and youths who were permitted, in less strictly-governed palaces, to resort to the women's apartments, and amuse with gossip and love-making the younger ladies as they bent over their embroidery frames. No man entered this conventual bower, except when introduced by the queen herself, and in her own company: all frivolity, or talking of scandal, was forbidden.

[1] Matilda—married to Henry Beauclerk, son of the Conqueror, her father's old enemy—became the Good Queen Maud of English history:

If there had been anything unreal about Queen Margaret's goodness, we know how her household would have fretted under these and other restrictions; the fineness of her nature is proved by the loyalty with which her discipline was maintained: 'all those who had the honour to serve her bore a particular love and respect to her person, so that none durst do anything unhandsome in her presence, *nor utter in her absence* a word that bore the least relish of impurity. . . . She united so much strictness with her sweetness of temper, so great pleasantness even with her severity, that all who waited upon her, men as well as women, loved her while they feared her, and in fearing loved her. There was a gravity in her very joy, and something stately in her anger.'

So much we are told and can imagine of Queen Margaret, and of how she spent her days. But much has been left out, especially these earthly, everyday, little things, which help us to reconstruct a life long passed away, and to see people 'in their habit as they lived.' Of Queen Margaret we know that she rose early in the morning, to pray. We have been told of the spare ascetic meals she ate, keeping under her body; and yet of the rich clothes she wore, deeming it not fitting for a queen to be otherwise attired. Day by day we can see her, going from church to council-chamber, from the crowd of beggars who encircled her 'as if she were their common mother,' to the hall where she sat with the king hearing cases and administering justice: nowhere is there a hint of relaxation, hardly of necessary rest. No wonder that, with labour and fasting combined, she became almost like that nun who

'. . . prayed and fasted till the sun
Shone, and the wind blew through her, and I thought
She might have risen and floated where I saw her.'

She was still a woman in the prime of life when she made her last journey from Dunfermline to Edinburgh. The 'infirmity' of which Bishop Turgot speaks had weakened her so much that she was no longer able to ride abroad on horseback. The years of her life and rule in Scotland (twenty-seven or thereabouts, as may be computed) had been spent with little change of scene.

Sometimes, in these past days, the queen would bid her horse be saddled, and accompanied by her chaplain and two or three attendants, she fared to the distant hill or lake where, on the island or in the glen, some one of 'the enclosed saints' or anchorites led a life of seclusion and prayer. Her visits to these lonely cells—which we are told she often made, for converse with their venerated inmates—and her journeys south of the Forth to the new royal residence, the fortified dwelling on the rock, that grew to be Edinburgh Castle and town—these set the limits of her horizon. Probably it would not have been safe for her to have gone beyond these bounds.

In those insecure days there was little to distinguish between a home and a prison; bolts and bars were alike the essential thing. Now, in failing health, and with anxious forebodings at her heart for the king's welfare and the future of the kingdom, Margaret left Dunfermline for the last time. Malcolm had quarrelled with William Rufus, and had swept south across the Tweed on one of his old, fierce, plundering forays. He had gone on this expedition against the advice of the queen, and she struggled with the sense of impending disaster. For the last time at Dunfermline, she went to pray before the altar in the church which she had built and adorned so richly with all the treasures

of art and devotion, and where she had appointed herself a place of burial. Then she entered the litter in which she was borne away, down from the palace by the steep entrance, followed by the farewells and lamentations of the poor ones whom her bounty had fed and blessed. About a mile from Dunfermline, on the road to Queensferry, is the stone where she had often sat, coming forth thus into the open field, so that all needy and friendless ones might have ready access to her with their petitions or complaints. This stone you may still see; and here perhaps her guard halted, and the litter rested a few minutes, that the Queen might look round on the familiar scene. But they must push on to gain the ferry, while wind and tide served for a speedy crossing. The place was called then, as it is to-day, the Queen's Ferry; it was so named because of Margaret's benevolent care for poor travellers who crossed the Firth there, and also for the many pilgrims who took that route to the Church of St. Andrew. On either shore she had caused rest-houses to be built, where wayfarers found shelter and refreshment; boats were provided for the crossing, all without fee or reward, for innkeepers and ferrymen were in the pay of the queen. These official folk came to do homage while the barge was being got ready for her passage, and—seeing her worn frame and suffering face as she looked from between the curtains of her litter—knew that the queen would not pass that way again. How little they guessed, as they watched her vessel's course across the breezy Firth—past Inchcolm where the holy hermit dwelt—and looked away to where Edwin's Fort rose on its high and lonely rock against the sky, of the world that was yet to be born, the busy life that was to be! To-day, a thousand

hammers are ringing on sea-breast and wall around those shores; overlooked by the Lomond hills, where once the wolf and the wild boar ran in the thicket, the great iron ships ride at anchor; and the Forth Bridge has bridled the very sea.

But these things no man could foretell, and indeed no one cared to look far into the future, for it seemed dark enough and full of trouble. There had always been a party in Scotland jealous of the foreigner and the southerner, and in the king's absence its supporters were gathering strength. Rumour and warning came to Margaret as she lay in her sick-room in the castle at Edinburgh, and her spirit was assailed with fears. Her sickness increased, and she, foreseeing the end, sent for her friend Bishop Turgot, and gave him her parting confidence and instructions; after speaking of 'matters which were pressing,' she commended her sons and daughters to his care, besought him to pray for her, and so bade him farewell.

The circumstances of her death are told very fully and in a most touching manner by the priest who attended her up to the last, one 'whom she loved more intimately than the others on account of his simplicity, his innocence, and his purity.' Four days before she died she warned those around her of some heavy calamity that had befallen the country, and too soon this premonition was confirmed by the news of the death of King Malcolm, and Edward, Margaret's eldest son, slain treacherously at Alnwick.

On the day of her death she recovered sufficiently to enter her oratory once more, and there she received the sacrament; she returned to her room to die. While she was still conscious, her son Edgar, on whom the duty of kingship had now fallen, entered his mother's room

with the tidings of his father's and brother's death. Speechless with grief, he could say nothing till the queen asked him, 'What news of the king, and of my Edward?' Fearing to say the truth in her extremity, he could only reply hoarsely that 'they were well.'

'I know it, my son, I know it,' she said, and besought him to tell her what had happened exactly.

She heard all with resignation, and praying, '. . . Lord Jesus Christ . . . Who hast by Thy death given life to the world, deliver me,' she died. It was the 16th of November 1093.

The din of battle was surging round the castle while her dead body, 'shrouded as became a queen,' lay waiting for burial. Donald Bane, the brother of Malcolm, at the head of the wild western tribes, had seized the opportunity of snatching the crown for himself.

Under cover of mist and night, Margaret's body was removed from the castle, escorted by her sons, who bore it in secrecy to Dunfermline, where it was reverently laid to rest in the abbey, at the spot she had herself chosen. She was ever regarded as a saint by the people of Scotland, who spoke of her as the Blessed Margaret long before the Pope gave formal sanction to her place among those whom the Roman Church specially venerates. Her bones have not been left to lie in Scottish earth. They were first removed and laid, for greater honour, in a silver shrine under the altar of the church she had built; they were afterwards, according to Roman authorities, acquired as precious relics by Philip II. of Spain, and by him placed in the Church of St. Lawrence at the Escurial.

This queen's faults have been so lightly passed over by her biographer, that her character lacks naturalness, but we can guess at certain qualities from the place she

takes in the history of the times. She loved power, and did not fail to exercise it; she was ambitious to establish her own family on the throne, and doubtless dreamed of a Celtic-Saxon dynasty which should unite the kingdoms. Her zeal for all things 'English' roused the resentment of many of her husband's Scottish subjects. In private life very likely she was not without that sweet obstinacy which besets many who believe themselves to be special instruments of God.

But when all is said, Margaret takes rank among the great women of history. In Scotland the miracles attached to her name are forgotten, but still the cave where she prayed, and the stone where she sat to give ear to the poor, are pointed out. A later generation renounced the outward form in which she practised her faith, but still Scots folk keep the Sabbath, and say grace after meals, as she first taught their forefathers to do; and though her memory has waxed faint and dim, throughout broad Scotland there are few households where the Blessed Margaret has not a name-daughter to-day.

The church she built has vanished, her ashes are in foreign sepulchre, but her descendants sit enthroned upon the Stone of Destiny at Westminster, and high upon the rock where she drew her last breath, her house of prayer still stands, little and old and rude—there, among the munitions of war, mutely testifying to these eternal things which shall subdue war and death and time itself.

## CATHERINE OF SIENA

NEARLY six hundred years ago, in the ancient, notable town of Siena in Tuscany, there lived a worthy couple, Giacomo Benincasa and his wife Lapa. They were simple-minded, honest, and godly folk, living—with their large household of children and apprentices—like those whom Dante has described,

> 'happy
> In such composed and simple fellowship,
> Such faithful and such fair equality.'

Their home was in the Workers' Quarter of Siena, the Contrada dell' Occa, or Ward of the Goose, so called probably because of the flocks of geese once kept there. Giacomo was a wool-dyer, and the Fullonica or dyer's house is still to be seen in the hollow to the west of the town, above which stands the great Church of St. Dominic. In this little humble dwelling was born a child who was destined to be one of the greatest figures of her century, and remarkable for all time. The date is 1347, a few months before the terrible outbreak of the Black Death 'which slew three parts and more' of the inhabitants of the city. This child was one of twins, of whom one, Giovanna, died; the other, Catherine, grew up a graceful, attractive, joyous child, well known and beloved in the whole neighbourhood, where she freely wandered. She was one of a family of twenty-five brothers and sisters, and it is not surprising that in such a crowded daily life a spirit of

self-reliance and adventure should be quickly formed. 'The baby is lost again' was a frequent cry, and the little Catherine would be sought for in the steep streets round about, and found in some neighbour's courtyard in happy play, delighting every one with her graceful, alluring ways.

A little child's days were spent very differently then from now; there was little or no deliberate teaching of any kind, no learning of the alphabet, nor laborious making of pot-hooks, nor spelling out words of three letters. Girls of Catherine's station grew up without learning to read or write. What lore they knew they gained through the ear and eye, from the sacred pictures in the churches, and from the legends and stories which were repeated to them. And then there was the vivid, turbulent, daily life of the streets, from which people learnt lessons at first hand. It is surprising to read of the freedom with which this baby-child wandered about the Quarter, climbing the stony stairs which led up the hillsides herself, alone—when we think of what might be going on. The feuds of the great families, the jealousies of the rival Arts (as the Trades-Guilds were called), or the rumoured interference of some outsider, filled the town with roaring, fighting mobs, as an everyday occurrence. There were the fierce games, when men from the rival wards met in the wild *Elmora* play with wooden swords and lances, or at *Pugna* chased each other through the streets, wounding and killing as they went: once a year there was the great race for the Palio (or banner with the Virgin's figure, which was the winner's prize), a time when people neither ate nor slept for excitement—a race which still rouses keen interest in the Siena of to-day.

From some safe window or porch on a wall, the little brown Catherine with the smiling eyes looked down and saw all those wild and gay and terrible things; among the crowds of bright moving figures—the men wearing costumes of red, green or white, according to their division of the city—she watched for the face of a friend among the gravely dressed friars, and when a woman of the *Mantellate* went past in her white robe and black mantle, she gazed at her with a heart full of unknown childish longings. When the street noises died away, she turned to listen for the sound of the church-bells from St. Dominic's across the valley, and her dreams were filled, not with recollections of the exciting things she had seen, but with fancies of a life of solitude in the desert. These things—the Church pictures and services, the stories of our Lord's life, and of the saints who followed Him, the hermits of the desert—filled the thoughts and the imagination of the child, so that her play was shaped in imitation of what she heard. She knew best the stories of St. Dominic, for she heard his praises from the friars of his order, who were frequent visitors at the Fullonica, where they were welcome guests. They were by no means well received everywhere, for the corruptions of the Church at that time caused universal discontent. Even the self-sacrifice and devotion shown by many of the Sienese friars in caring for the dead and dying during the recent awful experience of the plague, could not make men forget the greed and laziness of others, and the evil example shown to clergy and laity alike by the bad men who filled many of the highest places in the Church.

But Giacomo and Lapa Benincasa were simple, generous-hearted people, and they taught their children

to reverence the friars who visited the household, as worthy servants of God. Giacomo was a man of exceptional gentleness and goodness; in the big busy household no rough or profane language was ever heard, and he allowed no one to speak unkindly of absent neighbours. Mother Lapa was a woman of the Martha type, active and bustling, devoted to her family, ready to do her duty as far as she understood it, but unsympathetic with what she did not understand. She was proud of the happy little daughter whom every one loved, and often made plans for the day when she should be well placed in marriage, 'like the others.'

But the child Catherine was dreaming other dreams. The thought of wandering away into the desert was fascinating to her adventurous spirit, so one morning she left home, prudently taking a loaf of bread with her, in case the ravens who fed the prophet should fail to appear. She passed through the gates of the city for the first time in her life, crossed one range of low hills after another, until she was satisfied that the open country round her was now really 'the desert.' She found a little grotto, into which she crept, and spent the day in happy childish meditation. Towards evening it seemed to her that God spoke to her, and told her that this was not the kind of life He designed for her, and she must return to her father's house. Thoughts of her parents and of their anxiety now came to her, and she sped home so quickly that when the neighbours told of it afterwards, they said an angel had carried her. She was then a child of six or seven. Another story tells of how she and her little brother Stefano were returning home one evening about sunset. They had been sent on an errand to the house of

Bonaventura, their elder married sister. (It was she who, having married into a family less well-governed than the Benincasa, drooped under the change, until her husband feared for her health. He asked her the cause of her trouble. 'In my father's house I never heard the kind of talk that goes on here,' she said sadly, and her husband took pains that the coarse and profane words that hurt her should cease.) The children, then, were on their way home from her house, and after crossing the valley, they stopped and looked back to where St. Dominic's Church towered up, its huge bulk dark and solemn against the bright evening sky. Catherine stood and gazed, while her brother walked on, believing she was following. When he looked round for her, he saw her standing, still looking at the sky, her face fixed, her ears deaf to his calls. He ran back and seized her hand, when she started like one waked from sleep, and bursting into tears, said, 'O Stefano, if you had seen the beautiful thing I have seen, you would not have done that.'

It was the first experience she had of the vision or trance state, which often afterwards came upon her, and which, we must remember, aroused distrust as well as veneration in her contemporaries.

The years passed on, and Catherine—though she was still to every one the beloved and friendly child-neighbour, 'whose eyes smiled as sweetly as her lips'—became graver and more thoughtful, more inclined to withdraw into herself. Sometimes she gathered her little companions together and preached to them. It was one of her dreams that she might become a man, and preach to great multitudes, like St. Dominic and other heroes. Her good father and mother hitherto never guessed that they were the parents of a spiritual genius.

When she was twelve years old, they began to think of her marriage, and looked about for a suitable husband.

It seems as if for a time Catherine's thoughts were distracted from her early purpose, and she allowed herself to become interested in her appearance, so that she might be attractive in the eyes of possible suitors. At least she submitted to her mother's urgency in these matters, and to the advice of that same married sister, Bonaventura. But when Bonaventura died, young and lamented, in giving birth to a child, Catherine's mind recoiled from these temporary interests, and she besought her parents to let the project of her marriage drop. She looked upon her sister's death as a token of God's displeasure with her for having faltered in the course to which she believed herself called. Her parents were perplexed, for she did not wish to enter a convent, but to live the religious life, as God would show her the way, and remain unmarried. This was contrary to the custom of the time, when it was not considered safe or proper for young girls—except those in the shelter of the Church—to live without the protection of a husband. So that Catherine's parents may not be unduly blamed for subjecting her to a time of testing which was not unusually severe according to mediæval standards. She was given all the hardest household tasks, and was subjected to constant fault-finding—Lapa at best had a habit of scolding. Perhaps the greatest deprivation of all was that she had no little room or corner of her own where she could be quiet and alone.

Her gentle heart felt deeply her parents' displeasure, but she went quietly on her way, obedient and dutiful in all that was laid upon her, yet unswerving in her devotion to the aims of her soul. She

'endured hardness' in ways that seem to most of us unnecessary, and indeed repulsive, for, in imitation of St. Dominic, she practised austerities and inflicted such pains upon her poor young body, that her mother remonstrated, and wailed over her as for one already dead. In her later years Catherine valued these bodily severities less, and did not recommend them to those who came to her for spiritual counsel. Throughout all this time of trial and partial estrangement from her friends, she maintained her serenity, and, as she went about her household work, 'she would picture to herself that her father represented our Blessed Lord, her mother Mary, her brothers the Apostles and Disciples, and that she was working for them in the Temple so cheerfully and gladly that the household wondered greatly thereat.'

While her brother Stefano was out at work, she used to creep into his room for solitude and prayer, and here one day her father found her, absorbed in devotion; from that day he withdrew his opposition to her wishes. Soon the whole family recognised the obligation of the vow she had made in youth to accept no earthly bridegroom; her father blessed her, while her mother submitted in tears. A little room in the Fullonica was given up to her—a room still shown to visitors—and this became her cell, where she spent the next three years of her life in solitude, never going out, seeing no one except her confessor, and her mother, who refused to be kept out. Her bed was made of bare planks; she kept herself awake the greater part of the night, in prayer, while others slept. Afterwards she told her friend Raimondo of Capua, that in her struggle 'to overcome the body,' this had been her greatest hardship—the effort to do without sleep.

In her cell Catherine prayed and meditated, not in idle contemplation, but with a constant intellectual effort to know more and more of God. It was not a time of ease for her. She was tormented with doubts and evil visions. It seemed to her as if she had given up all for God, and He had forsaken her. 'Such an existence (of solitude) may end in apathy, or early death, or insanity, or again, when there is the mystic temperament, it may rise to intense devotion, and the happy visionary may be enraptured by heavenly sights and sounds, as was Catherine, after the hard struggle which for a time racked soul and body.'[1] She had a time of exquisite peace and happiness, but after a period of about three years had passed, the conviction was strongly borne in upon her that there was work outside waiting for her to do, and that she must once more face the world of men. Nothing, I think, shows Catherine's sincerity more than her action in this. She had with such difficulty won her way to this retirement, and her friends may have thought, when she reappeared among them, that she had abandoned her purpose of leading the religious life. It must have been a startling moment to the family in the Fullonica—as they sat, parents and children and work-people, ranged in the order of their age and duty, round the long table where their daily meal was spread—when timidly into their midst came the wan youthful figure of Catherine, that daughter of the house whom for three years not one of them but Lapa had seen, though they must often have passed the door of her cell with hushed and reverent steps. She did this hard thing, because she was made to understand that this was the will of God.

It was about this time that she had taught herself

[1] *Saint Catherine of Siena and Her Times.*

to read, so that she might study the Psalms and Gospels for herself. She already knew by heart portions used in the offices of the Church. Much later she learned to write, but most of her numerous letters were dictated to those companions who acted as her secretaries.

Catherine now began to feel her way towards the fulfilment of the commands which she felt laid upon her. She visited and relieved the sick and poor round about her father's house. Many, who had known and played with the merry brown baby, would welcome her back after those silent years, when her soul had travelled so far—looking at her, no doubt, with some awe and curiosity, wondering too, as men never ceased to wonder, at the happiness—the gaiety even—of her expression, and those bright fearless eyes which looked at every one with such frank kindness. She was still very young, about sixteen, and frail though her own body had become, she carried about with her an air of gladness and of health. She often sang at her work. She loved flowers, and delighted in weaving them into wreaths and garlands and posies, which she gave to her friends, 'to remind them of the love of the Creator.'

At last, after a time of probation, the great wish of her heart was fulfilled, and she became a *Mantellata*—that is, she put on the cloak or mantle of St. Dominic, as a member of the order he founded of Militia or lay helpers who worked under the direction of his Order of Preaching Friars. It was very unusual to admit a woman as young as Catherine to this society, and she was watched with jealous eyes by the other members and by outsiders.

As time passed on, her fame steadily grew, and with it came trouble. At first people spoke only of her

devotion and her benevolence (her father Giacomo had set aside a portion of his means for her to distribute), of her tenderness and care of the sick, and the wonderful cures she had accomplished. At such a time the story was told of how a poor man asked alms from her. She had no money, but promised to go home and get him help. 'I cannot wait,' he said. She gave him then the only precious thing she had, a little silver cross.

That night, in a dream, she saw Christ, holding in His hand her cross, no longer plain, but adorned with gems. 'Daughter, knowest thou this?' He said. 'Yesterday thou gavest it to one with a cheerful heart and a great love, which these stones signify. I will show it before men and angels at the Day of Judgment, to thy everlasting joy.'

She was so wise too, and so discreet, that she was consulted in family quarrels, and in disputes between workmen and employers; all this people spoke of, and the stories were repeated, half in wonder and half in jealousy. 'The dyer's daughter!' people said. 'Yes, yes, we know her well enough. She fasts in public, but she can eat readily in secret. Why does she put herself forward so? She has no motive but vanity.' They blamed her, too, because of the trance into which she often fell after praying in the church. So bitter were they about this, that once she was rudely seized in this unconscious state, and flung violently out at the church door, where her friends found her, lying as if dead on the steps under a blazing sun. It is sad enough to read that some of Catherine's most slanderous accusers were miserable sick people whom she nursed—one a leper, another a woman with a dreadful cancer whom no one else would come near. Yet

they taunted her to her face, and spread abroad stories most damaging to her reputation. She bore all with meekness, defending herself readily, but without anxiety, when she was questioned.

In the city the times were troubled; political strife had set the different guilds at enmity with one another; trade suffered greatly, and many families emigrated to other cities. In these times Catherine's father, Giacomo Benincasa, died, and three of his sons went to Florence, where they settled. Catherine, with her widowed mother Lapa and others of the family, remained in the old Fullonica at Siena, where a niece carried on the dyer's business. We can very well understand that Lapa was much more distressed by the calumnies against her daughter than was Catherine herself. In the old woman, love and pride were alike outraged, and we can imagine how even that serenity fretted her—fed, as it was, from deep and secret springs that no earthly malice could ruffle or poison. She besought her daughter to act more like other people, and the good and friendly father-confessor said the same. But Catherine bethought her of how she had seen the Lord in a vision holding for her choice a crown of gold and a crown of thorns. She had chosen the thorns, and was content.

In 1374 the Plague came again to Siena, and people died in thousands. 'They dropped,' says one chronicler, 'like rotten apples off the trees.' The brothers and sisters of St. Dominic worked untiringly. In the last visitation, forty out of the ninety members of the *Mantellate* had died. The *Spedale* or great hospital of Siena had long been familiar to Catherine in her visitation of the sick. Its staff were now taxed to their utmost, and one after another dropped. The younger

workers who took their places were encouraged by being told that they would have Catherine as a companion. 'Splendid!' they cried, 'beside *her*, work is rest.' The stories of the cures she wrought are very interesting reading at the present day, and if she was powerless to check the frightful course of the disease round her, there seems to be no doubt that her faith and wise courage snatched back more than one from the very jaws of death. Her perfect composure and cheerfulness among scenes which set others raving with fear, must have had a very fortifying effect both on sick and well. This was the time when she became acquainted with the excellent Raimondo delle Vigne, lately come to Siena, the Father Raymond who was her devoted friend and spiritual adviser for the rest of her life. He tells us that she cured many sick, and notes especially the case of Father Matteo, the director of the hospital, who was stricken with the plague, and of whom the doctor had 'only a very faint hope.' Raimondo left him in deep sadness, and went to his work in the wards. 'Meanwhile Catherine, who had heard the news, walked in, bright and energetic. "Get up, Father Matteo," she exclaimed cheerfully, "this is no time to be lying idle in bed," and as the sick man heard her, something of her own vitality seemed to pass into him. Raimondo, knowing nothing of this, met her as she was leaving the house, and stopped her. "Will you let one so dear to me, so useful to others, die?" he exclaimed. Catherine was startled and displeased. "Am I like God, to deliver a man from death?" she asked reprovingly. But Raimondo, "beside himself with grief," persisted. "I know that you obtain from God whatsoever you will," he said. Catherine stood with bent head, smiled

a little, and presently, looking him frankly in the face, she said, "Courage, he will not die this time," and went away, while he hurried back to Messer Matteo, who was no longer lying in bed at death's door, but risen on the way to recovery.'[1]

A brother and sister of Catherine's died of the Plague, and, of the eleven grandchildren whom Lapa was bringing up, six were laid in the grave at this time. The whole city was wrapped in mourning, but amidst their grief, people spoke with a new regard of the marvellous woman on whose vital, comforting presence they had learned to depend. They gave her many names of affection—'the People's Catherine,' 'the Beloved Sienese,' 'la Beata Popolana' (the Blessed Daughter of the People).

More wonderful than the instances of her healing power was her work as a peacemaker. From the early days of her ministry among the poor of her own quarter, she had been consulted and obeyed when matters of dispute arose, until, as her fame spread, civic matters were submitted to her for arbitration, and noble families, old and proud, begged her to intervene in their quarrels. Despairing hearts turned to her as one who knew the secret counsels of God. There was the young knight Tuldo, whom she comforted and reconciled to the bitter public death to which he had been condemned: there was that ancient nobleman, whose daughter-in-law, a young widow, was the beloved Alessia, one of Catherine's dearest friends and fellow-workers; she lived in the house of her father-in-law, and invited Catherine to spend some time under the same roof, in the hope of softening the heart of her fierce old relative, 'who feared not God, neither regarded man.'

[1] From *Saint Catherine of Siena and Her Times.*

The cheerful goodness of the two women, and the gay spirit with which Catherine met his rough jibes, surprised and touched the old man; he became ready to listen to 'good talk,' and at last admitted his willingness to confess and attend Mass, 'but I am still resolved to kill a certain prior, whom I hate with all my heart.' Catherine urged a more Christian part so winningly that his heart softened, and he went to the church where the prior officiated, with his favourite hawk on his fist as a peace-offering to his enemy. When he entered the place, the prior fled in terror, and was with difficulty induced to receive his former adversary, who now, with supreme courtesy, was bringing him as a gift his own most cherished possession. The prior was also a lover of falconry, and the reconciliation between the two was gracious and complete. This picturesque incident is an example of other instances of Catherine's influence. Sometimes it was the mother of fashionable and worldly daughters who besought for them the companionship and counsel of the dyer's daughter; again, families like the Salimbeni or the Maconi (of whom was Stephen, one of Catherine's most attached disciples, mirthful and ardent, a figure that still attracts) appealed to her to arbitrate in their feuds. It is astonishing to read of these rivals, proud and passionate Italian nobles, ready to spill blood for a word or look, submitting sometimes almost in spite of themselves, yet without coercion, to the gentle decisions of this 'poor little woman' (donnicciula) as Pope Urban afterwards called her.

But a still wider sphere was opening before her. In one of her visions, as she told Father Bartholomew of Siena, God said to her, 'I have appointed thee, My daughter, to a new manner of life. Thou shalt travel;

thou shalt go from city to city, as I will indicate to thee; thou shalt live with the multitude, and speak in public: I will send some to thee, and I will send thee to others, according to My good pleasure. Be thou ever ready to do My Will.'

When, therefore, an urgent demand came from Pisa that she should visit that city, Catherine recognised in it the fulfilment of her vision. She was now the recognised head of a little company or 'college,' men and women who were bound together in mystic family by their love of Christ, and of Catherine, whom they called 'mother.' When they entered Pisa, they were received by the archbishop, the Signore or head of the Government, and many others, a 'goodly company,' who conducted them to the apartments prepared for them.

Catherine was soon immersed in matters of high politics. She saw the ambassador of the Queen of Cyprus, who was on his way to Avignon with a mission to the Pope, Gregory XI., asking for aid against the Turks and Saracens. The project of a crusade roused all her hopes. She saw in it a means of freeing Italy of the bands of free lances or mercenaries who plagued the country, selling their services to whichever master could offer them the highest pay or plunder. She believed that the strife which continually broke out between the different principalities and cities would be allayed, if the swords of their leaders could be turned to nobler uses, and doubtless, too, she hoped that the old religious fervour and zeal for the honour of Christ would flame out once more, as men encouraged each other to enlist under the banner of the Cross.

She wrote eager letters to the Pope, to Queen Joanna of Naples, to the Queen of Hungary, whose kingdom was constantly threatened with Turkish

invasion, and to the principal military leaders of Italy. Many took fire at her words, and preparations for the crusade were being made, when at last the storms of discontent—long gathering in the Pope's dominions in Italy—broke out in open revolt. The removal of the papal court to Avignon had always been resented by the Italians, and their grievances were increased a thousandfold by the evil management, the extortions, and the crimes of the legates who represented the Pope, and collected his revenues. They enriched themselves, and robbed the people unmercifully. All these evils were an infinite grief to Catherine, and she did not hesitate to write and speak of them in the plainest terms of rebuke. When, later, she went to Florence to mediate between the republic and the Pope, who had punished the revolt of the Florentines by laying the city under the curse of excommunication, she plainly pointed out to the Holy Father that his subjects, or rather, as she calls them, 'his children,' had suffered from the cruelty and injustice of his own servants, and that if he would win them back, it must be by mercy, and by purifying the Church of the greedy, licentious, tyrannical men, who filled so many of its high offices. A zeal for righteousness burned like a flame in the pure breast of Catherine, and yet, unlike most reformers, she could treat the very individuals whose sins she rebuked, with tenderness and forbearance.

We get strange glimpses of the life she led; at Pisa, one hour absorbed in conferences with the authorities, or dictating letters to royal and great personages, or captains of freebooters (like the English Sir John Hawkwood) whom she sought to win; passing from these to pleasant hours of intercourse with friendly *Mantellate* and disciples; then retreat into solitude

and that unseen world of mystical intercourse, when like St. Paul she was caught up into the third heaven and beheld that which is not lawful for the tongue to utter; and finally, that crowning hour of awe and mystery when in the Church of St. Cristina, she believed herself to have received the Stigmata, invisible to other eyes. These moments of rapture were interspersed with times of great physical and mental suffering. She returned to Siena, where the townspeople were murmuring at her long absence, and in her little familiar cell in the Fullonica, sought silence and rest.

Here, as she lay stretched on her plank bed, ill with fever, Father Raymond came to her with news of Florence and the ill state of things there; the rebellious city, maddened by the last act of the Pope's legate, whose soldiers had in time of scarcity swept the harvest off the grain-fields and left the people of Tuscany to starve, was now withering like a blighted plant under the ban of interdict; no church bell rang, nor public prayer was made for living or dead; commerce had failed, for who would buy or sell where no bargain was legal or binding! The workpeople, hungry and idle, went cursing through the streets. And, at the other end, the Pope at Avignon was preparing to launch an army of soldiers, led by the savage Robert of Geneva, to crush his unhappy dominions into obedience.

Catherine was in despair. After hours of prayer and anguish, she wrote a long, eloquent letter to the Pope, urging him to return himself to Italy, and to win back the hearts of his erring children by showing them justice and clemency. The Florentines had already sent messengers to plead their cause at Avignon, but they had hopelessly failed in winning the

cardinals, though Gregory himself was not unfavourable. Catherine's persistent courage and confidence are amazing to us, when we think of the great forces arrayed against her, and her humility in everything touching herself personally. It is true that she had the confidence and affection of most of her country-folk, heightened by a good deal of superstitious veneration, but they were fickle enough in their support of her, as we shall see, and in those days people were ready to cry up a woman as a saint one day, and burn her as a witch the next. Voices, muttering that Catherine in her trances had dealings with the Evil One, were never quite silent.

She wrote letter after letter to Gregory, urging all her old pleas for reform, and when the Florentine rulers sent to her praying for her good offices in another effort to mediate with the Pope, she was ready to set forth on the great adventure of her life. She went first to Florence, where she conferred with the chiefs of the different factions in the city, whose contentions made united action so difficult. It was agreed that she should go to Avignon, and make peace there with the Pope, if might be, so as to gain a favourable hearing for the ambassadors who would follow later.

In accepting the mission, Catherine was thinking of more than Florence. She hoped to persuade the pontiff to return to Rome, where his presence, she believed, would strengthen the cause of religion, and check the abuses in the Church; and she still cherished the idea of a crusade. The journey was long and difficult for one in Catherine's weak health. She was accompanied by a group of faithful friends and helpers, among them Stephen Maconi, the young Sienese noble, whose dearest wish it was to serve her, and be in her

society. Father Raymond had gone earlier to negotiate their reception at Avignon, for Catherine went, not only as accredited from the republic city of Florence, but as a person acceptable to the Pope, whom he was prepared to receive with confidence. The date was June 1376.

So they set out, this little company, to traverse the plains and mountain ranges that lay between them and the city of their quest. Some among them were scholars and men of eminence in the Church, but the head and soul of them was this Catherine, the dyer's daughter, a woman of humble birth, without beauty, without learning, except what she had won for herself unaided, with no gifts that we can reckon in terms of earthly value, going calmly forth to treat on equal terms with the greatest powers of the time! It says much for her century, that with all its ferocity, its ignorance and its superstition, men both high and low recognised in her the presence and the power of God, and honoured her accordingly. Modern life affords no parallel to this remarkable embassage.

For more than sixty years the papal court had been established at Avignon under the influence of the French kings. The 'little windy city, full of bells,' dominated by the great palace where dwelt the head of the Church, had an ill name, in spite of its numerous churches and monasteries. It was famous for luxury and wickedness; its narrow streets were lined with shops full of rich wares, past which jostled an ever-changing crowd, with splendid cavalcades pressing through of 'ladies, knights, and cardinals, all purple, silk, and glittering armour, hawk on fist, pages and jugglers round them.' These princes of the Church lived, not like churchmen, but like the great nobles, with whom

they competed for power and precedence, as in splendour and in arrogance they excelled them. Gregory himself was timid and vacillating, distressed at the scandals which reached his ears, but not strong enough to cope with them. He was a lover of art, and collected treasures, especially rare manuscripts and illuminated missals.

Into this unfamiliar artificial atmosphere Catherine came, the daughter of Tuscany, brave and simple and stern. She never seems to have faltered or felt concern at the thought of the principalities and powers she must face. She was well received; the Pope had ordered that the palace of an absent cardinal should be put at the disposal of herself and her friends.

After a day or two for rest, she was summoned to appear and state her case before Pope and cardinals assembled in the hall of the Consistory in the papal palace. Up the steep ascent of the Rock of the Domes she went, through terraced gardens, and by wide marble staircases and corridors, through the luxurious apartments of the palace, seeing little of it all in her eagerness to deliver her message. She was ushered into a stately room adorned with frescoes; the cardinals in their purple robes were seated in a circle round the Pope, who occupied a throne in the midst. With curiosity and surprise they looked at the worn little woman who advanced before them in her white serge Dominican gown and the black mantle, threadbare and beloved, that she had patched so often with her own hands. *This* was the ambassador of the proud and rebellious republic city! Yet they recognised that she 'spoke as one having authority': she was upheld, as ever, by the assurance of her divine mission. She spoke in her native Sienese dialect; Father Raymond inter-

preted, for Gregory was a Frenchman, and had never learnt Italian. As Catherine's voice went on in eloquent pleading for the Florentines, it was evident that the Pope was deeply moved, and at the close he astonished all by committing the terms of peace entirely to Catherine. 'I entrust to you the honour of the Church,' he said. After the interview, the cardinals withdrew, doubtful and displeased; they were by a large majority French, and hostile to every kind of Italian influence: they distrusted, too, the demand for reform which this visionary woman was constantly pressing.

Catherine was full of joy and gratitude. 'I have spoken with the Holy Father and certain cardinals and secular lords, and the grace of our gentle Saviour has been greatly shown in the matters for which we came here,' she wrote. But clouds soon gathered. The delegates, who were promised from Florence to follow up the auspicious beginning which Catherine had made, failed to appear. Day after day, some of her company watched for news or sign of them in vain, until the wounding thought laid hold of her that she had been betrayed. She had other ordeals to face. She was an object of curiosity to the *beau monde* of Avignon; the ladies of the papal court, at first contemptuous, became interested in her when they heard of her strange, powerful influence with men like the Duke of Anjou, the brother of the King of France, as well as with many among the cardinals themselves. These ladies, beautiful and witty, some of them poets and singers with names as melodious as their rhymes—Estéphanette, Lauretta, Cécile and Miramonde—were ready to take up the Sienese stranger, with her visions and her pious fervours, as a picturesque novelty; it

would be amusing to vary their entertainments with a religious séance. So charming were they in their approaches to Father Raymond that they almost won over that good man; he was 'moved by such unexpected signs of grace.' When Catherine repelled their overtures brusquely, he was vexed with her. 'In truth it is not good in you, dear mother, to be indifferent to such courtesy; all the great ladies make profound reverences to you when they meet you, and you turn away your head; when they approach you with amiable words about religion, you reply roughly. . . . Is it well to treat your fellow-creatures thus?' Man-like, Raymond was deceived by the delicate female arts and flatteries which the clear-eyed Catherine brushed aside. She always had a commanding power of reading the hearts of those who came to her. Once, when she was kneeling in church, rapt in prayer, one of these same ladies (like an irresponsible cruel child) ran her dagger into the stranger's foot, to satisfy her curiosity as to whether the saint felt pain like other people. So great was the hurt that Catherine left the church, lame and bleeding.

Weeks passed at Avignon. Rumours came from Florence of fresh difficulties thrown in the way of peace. At last the commissioners came, but they ignored Catherine. 'We have no power to treat with you,' they said, 'we have come to treat with the Pope.' Her enemies sneered at her, as one who had come on false pretences. For a moment her courage broke, and she retreated to her chamber and wept bitterly. But she was soon herself again, writing frank courageous letters to the Florentines, remonstrating with them for their inconsistencies, adding, 'I will do all I can, even to death.'

She was tried, too, severely in matters theological. By Gregory's request, she had given addresses in the hall of the Consistory, which moved all who heard her to confess that the Holy Spirit spoke through the lips of this woman. There were learned prelates, however, who still doubted whether this Catherine of Siena were truly 'as saintly as is pretended,' and they asked the Pope's permission to visit her. 'I think you will be greatly edified,' Gregory said. For hours they questioned her, first taunting her over her Florentine mission, perhaps with the intention of rousing her to anger. But she replied so calmly and modestly that they were gradually disarmed. They examined her about her visions, as to whether they were not 'delusions of the demon,' and led on to other theological subtleties. Catherine's friends, who were present, trembled for her, for they knew how fatal a slip in answering might be. The charge of sorcery, or heresy, could so readily be brought, and was so difficult to disprove in the terrible process of the Inquisition.

Friar John Tantucci (of Cambridge), one of Catherine's company, sought sometimes to answer for her. 'Be quiet,' they said, 'she satisfies us better than you do.' In the end they left, marvelling over her wisdom and her humility.

The delays caused by the political uncertainties in Florence, prolonged Catherine's stay in Avignon. She took advantage of the time, and of Gregory's friendliness, to press upon him his duty in returning to Rome. One day, when he was showing her some of the beautiful things in his palace, he had spoken of the repose his soul found among them, and in the contemplation of Nature. Catherine looked up in a sudden inspiration, and said, 'In the name of God, and for the fulfilment of

duty, you will close the gates of this magnificent palace, you will turn your back on this beautiful country, and set out for Rome, where you will be amidst ruins, tumults, and malaria fever.'

To this heroic note, even the timid soul of Gregory responded, and in spite of the opposition of the cardinals and the displeasure of the French, especially of the inhabitants of Avignon, he resolved to return to Rome. Preparations were made in secret for his departure; Catherine negotiated for three galleys, to be ready for his embarking at Marseilles, and on the 13th September he left Avignon accompanied by an imposing train of cardinals, bishops, chaplains and domestic servants, with chariots full of treasure. Catherine had succeeded where all temporal powers had failed, and one of her great hopes was realised.

The Pope had a terrible journey, being at least five months on the way. At Genoa he would have turned back, were it not that Catherine, who had travelled overland, met him, and once more strengthened his resolution. So anxious was Gregory to have her counsel, and yet so fearful of hostile opinion, that he came secretly at night to visit her at the house of the Lady Orietta Scotti, where she was staying with her friends. He had actually yielded to the advice of the cardinals to return to Avignon, but he now persevered on his journey with fresh courage, and was received 'with much joy and magnificence by the Romans, the people in their excitement weeping for gladness, and kissing the ground he trod on.'

Catherine returned to Siena, where the townsfolk had again been grumbling at her long absence. Her old mother, now past eighty years of age, was clamorous for her daughter's return. But once more Florence

claimed her—rebellious Florence, that had treated her so ill. A special missive came from the Pope commanding her to go there to help to make peace. The city was in a turmoil of political faction; the two great parties, the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, were at each other's throats; mixed with them in strife were the guilds of industries; and the lowest strata of all, the populace that had no political rights, had risen in revolt. Terms of peace with the Pope were eventually come to, and the interdict was removed, but in the meantime tumult and revolution arose. Catherine was far too honest, and too plain-spoken, not to have made many political enemies in Florence. When the mob rose, the houses of some of her friends were burnt to the ground, and she was warned by the citizens that they could no longer protect her. A cry went among the baser elements that Catherine of Siena had plotted to hand the city over to the Pope. 'Where is she? Where is that wicked woman?' they cried. 'Let us find her and burn her! Let her be cut in pieces.' From one retreat to another she was hunted, until the rabble found her in a deserted garden, kneeling, with some of her followers round her.

One fierce fellow, with a naked sword in his hand, rushed in shouting, 'Where is Catherine?' She went to him calmly, and said, 'I am Catherine. Do to me what God wills, but in His name I forbid you to come near or touch any of those who are with me.' Such was the power of her look that the man quailed before her, and went hurriedly away, taking his followers with him. After a day or two in hiding, Catherine and her friends retired to the monastery at Vallombrosa, whence they returned to Florence when times were quieter. Before the treaty of peace was actually signed, Pope

Gregory XI. died, weary of the 'loud fighting times' in which it had been his lot to live.

The new Pope, Urban VI., was elected amidst scenes of violence and disorder, but the Roman populace was satisfied, because an Italian had been chosen. Catherine had returned to Siena, where she enjoyed a few months of comparative quiet. It was at this time that she wrote and dictated her *Book of Divine Teaching*, or 'Dialogue between the Soul and God.'

Very soon, that happened which was the scandal of Christendom in the Middle Ages—the Great Schism—when a second pope, or anti-pope, was chosen under French influence and set up in opposition to Urban. This was the ruthless soldier-cardinal, Robert of Geneva, who took the name of Clement VII. Over all Europe the Church was divided. The faithful Catherine was heartbroken. At Avignon, in a prophetic moment, she had foretold troubles that were to come on the Church. But even yet she did not despair. She poured out her heart in impassioned letters to the Italian cardinals who had deserted Urban, to the Queen of Naples, to the Pope himself. They are all to be read in the collection of her letters, which was preserved by the care of her disciples.

Urban, whose unpopularity partly arose from his domineering nature, as well as from his determination to carry out reforms in a high-handed way, found himself so deserted that he wrote beseeching Catherine to come to Rome to help him with her presence and counsel. 'I am like a sparrow alone on the house-top,' he wrote.

She hesitated before obeying this summons. She knew that her frequent journeys scandalised many in her community. 'They say a Religious should not

fly about so much,' she wrote to Father Raymond. But the Pope sent his special commands, and she went. Perhaps she knew, as she rode out through the towered gates of Siena with her ever-faithful group of disciples, that she would return no more to the city of her birth, for, when they had gone a little way, she stopped and gazed back long and earnestly at its crested walls on the hillside. This was in the autumn of 1378.

For a year and a half she lived at Rome along with her 'college,' in a house lent her by the Pope, where also 'she received very many servants of God, because of her great hospitality. For although she owned no lands, nor gold nor silver, and lived with all her family on daily alms, yet was she as ready to receive and entertain a hundred pilgrims as though they had been only one, trusting heartily in God, and not questioning but that His liberality would provide. The lowest number that lived in her house was sixteen men and eight women; at times there were even thirty or forty. She had established such good order in the household that each sister, week by week, took it in turns to provide and dole out to the others, so that they might give themselves to God, and to pilgrimages, and other matters which had brought them there.'

Her days in Rome were filled with all her wonted activities of blessing, the care of the sick, and those in prison, the wounded—for there was actual warfare going on between the adherents of the rival popes, and Catherine was summoned from the papal council-chamber to consultations with the men-at-arms. The Roman populace soon came to know and reverence that figure, so frail that 'they who saw her would have taken her for a phantom rather than a living being.' She was only thirty-three, but her eager, glowing spirit was

like a keen sword that has worn out its scabbard. 'Be assured,' she said, in farewell to a friend, 'that if I die, the sole cause of my death is the zeal which burns and consumes me for Holy Church.' To Catherine, the Western Church, till then undivided, was the visible symbol of Christ on earth.

Her friends wrote down in touching fulness the details of her last days—the distress, the mysterious agony of flesh and spirit, until at last came death and peace.

They wept for her—old men and women, some of them—like children deprived of their mother. Stephen Maconi of Siena, who had so often enlivened her 'college' with his witty and amusing letters, carried her body in his arms to Santa Maria sopra Minerva, the Church of the Preaching Friars, where it lay, robed in the familiar white and black; and all Rome came pressing round it, to gaze and weep and wonder at the memory of that pure and ardent soul.

She died at Easter-tide, 1380. In her native Siena a festival was instituted in her honour; it is still observed in May, the month of flowers, as was fitting for her, who used to say that every one should wear white garments and flowers for the graces that these symbolise. She was canonised by the Pope in the year 1461.

Catherine of Siena stands among those great and lonely figures whose powers and whose experiences transcend those of ordinary men and women. We cannot judge her by common standards, nor perhaps accept her example as a safe one to follow. Marvel-stories grew up round her memory—as when it was said an empty cask poured out rich wine for her need, but even her 'true miracles' of healing would be

unconvincing were it not for the much greater miracle of her own life-history from one scene to another. We may make what allowance we please (and we must make much) for the superstition and credulity of the time, but we cannot explain away that 'fulness of power' in this 'humble woman-thing,' which set her, as it were, on a throne among princes, and bound the hearts of all who came near her with an affection surpassing that of ordinary human ties. Her life was a continuous miracle of faith and love.

# VITTORIA COLONNA

'High o'er the sea-surge and the sands,
Like a great galleon wrecked and cast
Ashore by storms, thy castle stands
A mouldering landmark of the past.

Upon its terraced walk I see
A phantom gliding to and fro,
It is Colonna—it is she
Who lived and loved so long ago.'

VITTORIA COLONNA, the friend of Michelangelo—so men remember her. The pride of the long line of Roman princes who were her forefathers, her beauty, her faithful love, her gift of poetry—all these would not have saved her from the dust of forgetfulness; but, for the 'sweet strange comfort' that her serene and purifying friendship brought to the great artist, 'with age grown bleak and uttermost labours,' she is given a gracious share in his immortality. Though the facts of her life are sufficiently well known, they are not numerous enough to give us more than a few pictures of her. We see her, in 'her perfect womanhood,' the type of a poet's dream fulfilled, among the bad, splendid women of that wonderful Renaissance time in Italy.

She was born in the year 1490 in the castle of Marino, the home of her family in the Alban Hills, near Rome. For more than four hundred years the lordly and turbulent Colonnas had ruled and fought in those regions: they led in the quarrels which filled Italy

with the strife of factions; they did not hesitate to make war upon the Pope himself, and during those centuries of change and turmoil their power and wealth had grown. Vittoria's father, Fabrizio Colonna, was noted in his day for military prowess; in his youth he had fought against the Turks. In those days in Italy the sword was never sheathed, the jealousies of the little states, the rivalries and intrigues of Pope, French king, and emperor gave the land no peace. For the soldier of fortune it was a golden age. The wealthy merchants of the great trading cities paid for the hire of the mercenaries who protected their commerce, or avenged their quarrels. It was a time of the vassalage of women, and yet a high doctrine of 'Celestial Love' was taught and sung by poets and romancers—a doctrine by which the ideal Beloved was worshipped almost as a divinity. As we shall see, it was this reverence for an idealised figure that made beautiful the friendship between Vittoria Colonna and Michelangelo.

The story of Italy gives us in these years pictures of wealth and magnificence, of glowing life expressing itself in a thousand splendid forms, side by side with other visions:

> 'wasted lands,
> Blight and famine, plague and earthquake . . .
> Clanging fights and flaming towns, and sinking ships and praying hands.'

And again the old gods looked down from their secret golden houses, smiling over the woes of men. For, with the revival of learning, the mythology of Greece and Rome came forth once more into the light of day, and Christianity for a time was half submerged by paganism.

In this hour of strange warring forces Vittoria Colonna came into the world. Her mother, Agnese di Montifelto, daughter of the Duke of Urbino, was only eighteen when this her eldest child and only daughter was born. Vittoria had afterwards five brothers. To the eldest, Federigo, who died young, she composed some of her most beautiful sonnets. Her first years were spent among the beautiful surroundings of the castle of Marino, but she passed early from her young mother's care. At the age of five she was betrothed, for political reasons, to Ferrante Francesco d'Avalos, the little son of the Marchese di Pescara. These early betrothals were the rule in Italy, and personal choice or liking entered not at all into the case—especially on the bride's part, as many a story tells. The affianced couple were not often so well matched in years as in the case of Vittoria and Francesco, and, if one of her biographers is correct in saying that the two were brought up together at Ischia in the care of Francesco's elder sister, the Duchessa di Francavilla, we can understand how the deep devotion of Vittoria's married years was founded on early love and intimacy. In one of her sonnets she says, 'Hardly had my spirit entered into life when my heart proscribed every other affection.' But of these early years we know very little. We can imagine Vittoria growing up, modest, beautiful and wise, highly trained in learning, as women of the upper class now often were: we are told that 'she made great proficiency and gained great praise from her instructors, so that her growth in beauty and learning was greater than could be found scattered among many other children.'

The Duchessa di Francavilla, her guardian, was one of the notable great ladies of the time. War and murder

had carried off her father, brother and nephews, so that upon her devolved the duties of the head of the family. She held the island and castle of Ischia as Castellana, or Governor, in the Spanish interest, and was recognised as a ruling power by other princes. Like other feudal ladies of her time, she would not have hesitated to defend her castle by force of arms against all comers. She was, besides, a patroness of learning. She had studied Italian, Latin, and poetry, and was herself an author. In such an atmosphere it is not strange that Vittoria should have grown up with a love of literature, and gained that facility in expression which afterwards made her famous. There was everything to stimulate her mind and her imagination in the witty and learned society which the Duchessa affected, and in the natural beauty which surrounded her at Ischia, a 'paradise of verdure and of silence' among the purple waters of the Neapolitan Gulf. She had grown up tall and stately; her noble carriage and her magnificent hair, golden-rayed like the sun, were praised in rhymes by the poets of the day. Rival suitors appeared, ignoring that early betrothal, to bid for her hand, 'but one is too far off, another is too old, the other is too young,' a chronicler said. The Pope intervened, confirming the engagement with the Spanish Pescara. Of him we get a glimpse at the festivities in honour of the visit to Naples of the Spanish king, Ferdinand the Catholic, when 'after the feast had been served, the tables being removed, dancing began; among the dancers was the young Pescara, who with such art and such gravity made numerous steps, and fulfilled all the varieties of the dance that even the king, a man of extremest prudence and judgment, having fixed his eyes solely on him, said publicly to the

barons, while pointing out to them Pescara, "that youth, from his movements and appearance, seems to me a captain greater than those around him, and, if my opinion errs not, he will prosper above them all."'

We can see the young Spanish noble passing with grave and graceful steps among the dancers: afterwards, in the maze of fickle Italian politics, he becomes less admirable. At that time he was spoken of as 'a charming boy and of the best dispositions. He had few equals in manners, in letters or in arms.' He had auburn hair, an aquiline nose and bright eyes: with his courage and knightly person he seemed a fitting mate for the beautiful Vittoria. They were married in December 1509 at Ischia with much pomp. The bride was escorted to the castle by a splendid cavalcade of the Roman nobility, and family records tell of the variety and richness of the trousseau and wedding gifts; suits and gowns of every colour of brocade, silk and velvet, petticoats of carnation and cherry-coloured silk, a gold-fringed hood, and a mantle of crimson velvet trimmed with ermine, are in the list of wedding bravery—besides gifts from the bridegroom of jewels of great value—*twelve* gold bracelets and a writing-desk of gold. The great state-bed of French fashion, with curtains and hangings of crimson satin lined with blue taffetas, gold-fringed, its counterpanes and pillows also crimson satin and gold, was provided by the Colonna family. Beds of this gorgeous description were found in all noble and wealthy houses; they were considered very important pieces of furniture, and were often as unwholesome as they were splendid. There were days of feasting and pageantry at such a wedding as this—massive banquets when 'oxen roasted whole in sweetmeat

casings were followed by courses of gilded sheep and every kind of game. When the pies were cut, children, fancifully dressed in allegorical costume, and animals were released. . . . There were structures of sugar that imprisoned birds, which flew away when their encasements were opened.' (Our rhyme about the four-and-twenty blackbirds must be a survival from these inventions.) Poems were composed and recited in honour of the occasion; there was music and dancing; and in the streets, gay with tapestries and flowers, jousts and processions went on. The waste and extravagance were great, but the authorities welcomed occasion to amuse and pacify the populace with eating and drinking and shows.

Amid all this suffocating festivity we almost lose sight of the bride, young and wise and fair, in her heavy, gold-embroidered dress. Bride and bridegroom were the same age—nineteen. Unlike many joyless unions of the time, their marriage was a true love match; 'there was not such another pair in Italy' the chroniclers said, in admiration of their brilliant qualities and prospects of happiness. For three years Vittoria's life was one long honeymoon. From the gaieties of Naples, where her father, Fabrizio Colonna, had been for years Grand Constable, she went with her Pescara to Pietralba, a charming villa belonging to her husband's family, where many merry parties were held in honour of the newly wedded pair. But their chief home was Ischia, for by Italian custom a bride put herself under the protection and guidance of her husband's family. In Vittoria's case she was happy in the companionship of the Duchessa, her friend and sister-in-law, and in the society of the cultivated and brilliant people who frequented the castle. The memory

of those days of sunshine spent at her husband's side was afterwards recalled in mournful lines in the sonnets she wrote.

Her sky was soon overcast. Early in 1512 her husband, her father and brothers, all were summoned to the field of war. Her father was governor-general of the united Italian and Spanish forces gathered against the French. The Marchese, her husband, received high command as captain-general of the light cavalry, a post seldom given to one so young. He was a brave and dashing soldier, beloved by his followers, and his wife's heart must have swelled both with pride and foreboding, as she bade him farewell in his splendid accoutrements. His shield bore the Spartan motto, 'Either with this or upon it.' Vittoria did not belie her Roman descent in parting courageously with her husband, remembering, 'that those who desire to attain glory and fame must give up their private wishes.'

Not many weeks had passed when, in April, tidings came of the battle of Ravenna, won by the French after a long determined fight. The Marchese di Pescara, severely wounded, was left for dead on the battle-field. He was taken prisoner to Milan, as was also his father-in-law, Fabrizio Colonna. This was dreadful news. In a rhymed letter Vittoria sends her husband, complaining of her bitter anxieties, she tells how 'never before came messenger from whom I did not seek to know every little particular to make my mind joyful and at ease.' She describes the fatal day when, as she lay at the point of the island of Ischia ('in the *body*, my *mind* is always with *thee*'), a dark mood fell upon Nature, and some sense of impending disaster was communicated to her mind. Her classical studies make her introduce sea-gods into the picture. The

strong-minded Duchessa ('the magnanimous Costanza') comforted her, saying, 'Do not think of it. It would be strange for such a force to be conquered.' How joyfully she welcomed Pescara home, after he was set at liberty by the payment of a ransom, we can imagine from the poem she wrote when, in her widowhood, she earnestly gathered all her past experiences into cherished recollection.

> 'His glorious wounds compliant to my prayers
> He showed to me, and told me where he met
> And how he broke the ranks of hostile spears.
> The joys that then he gave are changed to cares,
> My thoughts run counter and my eyes are wet
> With a few sweet, and many bitter, tears.'[1]

His knightly appearance had gained by those 'glorious wounds,' for we are told that Isabella, Duchess of Milan, exclaimed on seeing him—'I would I too were a man, Signor Marchese, if for nothing else but to receive wounds in the face as you have done, in order to see if they would become me as well as they do you.'

Pescara went to the wars again, and after this we get only occasional glimpses of him by his wife's side. Once they were in Rome together at the splendid court of Leo X., when the beautiful and learned Marchesa shone among the other celebrities, but most of Vittoria's time was spent at Ischia, where she devoted herself to study with the earnestness that other women give to the pursuit of pleasure. Francesco and she were childless; she had proposed to her husband that he should adopt as his heir his young cousin, the Marchese del Vasto. To tame and train this boy in the ways of love and duty (for he had been reckoned so 'headstrong and violent that he seemed doomed to a life of crime') gave her worthy occupation in the early years

[1] Translated by the Hon. Alethea Lawley.

of her husband's absence. When he had grown to an age to bear arms, she sent him fearlessly to join Pescara in his campaigns. She knew the boy was panting for action—running from church to church with offerings for every shrine and saint that might speed him in his wish to be a soldier. 'Take him with you!' she said. 'If he is lost there is only a man the less; if he dies only one family will be extinct.' Better that, than that a d'Avalos should be a coward. She gave him a splendid tent decorated with silk and embroidery; she had herself worked upon it the Latin saying: '*Nunquam minus otiosus quam cum otiosus erat ille*' ('He was never less idle than when he was idle').

As the years went on, the Marchese di Pescara gathered laurels as a soldier and commander. Various dignities were conferred on him: we catch sight of him escorting the newly wedded Queen of Poland, Donna Bona Sforza, from Naples after her magnificent marriage festivities there, to Manfredonia, where she took ship for Poland with all her sumptuous belongings. Among the illustrious ladies who attended this great wedding, the chronicler points out to us the Signora Vittoria Marchesa di Pescara, riding a black-and-white jennet caparisoned in crimson velvet fringed with gold. She wore a robe of red velvet brocade, embroidered with gold sprays and bound with a golden girdle; on her head a crimson satin cap and a coif of beaten gold. She was attended by six grooms in doublets and jerkins of blue and yellow satin, and in her train were her six waiting-women attired in blue damask. At this time Vittoria was said to be perhaps the most beautiful woman in Italy. We can understand how the people thronged to gaze at such a gay and glittering pageant as a wedding like this provided.

Pescara went on his brilliant way, winning victories, taking and sacking towns, making such a figure in the world that he was naturally elected a delegate to attend the crowning of Charles V. as German King in the ancient city of Aix-la-Chapelle. He may have been in England in the train of Charles when, on his way to Aix, he landed at Dover to visit King Henry VIII. Vittoria, in her dignified seclusion at Ischia, cherished his name and fame, closing her ears to certain things men said of him, as being only the ill words of enemies, though she had good cause herself to reproach him. In 1522 her mother died while returning from a pilgrimage to Loretto. Her father had died two years before. Pescara, having heard of Donna Agnese's death, hurried to Naples to visit and console his wife. When Vittoria and her husband parted after three short days spent together, it was for the last time. During the three remaining years of Pescara's wars and intrigues they never met. The fortunes of the Marchese carried him on to the battle of Pavia, when the French were broken, and King Francis I. had to yield himself a prisoner to the allied generals, of whom Pescara was one. Then he was drawn into the plots of the Italian League, lured by the vice-chancellor Morone of Milan, whom he in turn betrayed to his master Charles V. Vittoria, who had written warning him against Morone's bribes, and reminding him which way honour led, exclaimed mournfully, when she heard how treacherously he had used the chancellor—'there exists no greater enemy to man than over much prosperity.' Not long after came the news of her husband's death at Milan. Weakened by wounds, and harassed by the affairs in which he had entangled himself, he had fallen ill. As he felt his strength leaving him, he sent a message to Vittoria

at Ischia, bidding her come to him. She set out instantly, but at Viterbo another messenger met her to tell her he was already gone. She swooned on hearing the news, and at first her friends feared for her life.

Whatever cause of sorrow her husband in his lifetime may have given her, the recollection passed from her at his death. 'When he died 'twas time for me to die' she wrote, in one of the sonnets in which she raised a monument to his memory, more splendid and enduring than marble.

> 'Then in what height must she of right be placed?
> That such a gift unto her spouse doth give,
> That, being dead, she still doth make him live.'

The words are translated by Sir John Harrington from a poem by Ariosto, addressed to Vittoria,—'a most fit name

> 'For one in triumphs borne, in triumphs bred
> That passeth Artimesia in the fame
> Of doing honour to her husband dead;
> Yet which is more to lay the dead in grave,
> Or else from death with learned pen to save.

In the long series of her sonnets there is not a word but praise of her hero. All that is unworthy is forgotten. She remembers only the gallant figure of the youthful bridegroom, the brave soldier. 'Death consecrated her husband for Vittoria as death canonised Laura for Petrarch.' She sees him now as a saint in heaven, and prays him 'from these proud heights and ineffable beauties' to look down on one below, 'For I am, I am *indeed* the same, though rapidly has departed from my cheek, my eyes, my hair, all that thou wast pleased to call beauty. I only thought well of it because it was precious in thy sight! But it is gone from me now, never never to return.'

The charm of her poems is in their simplicity and

naturalness. She wrote, as she tells us, to ease her own heart, not to add lustre to her husband's fame:

> 'With other pen, in wiser words be done
> His tale.'

She claims no beauty of style, nothing but 'the gift of grief and tears,' yet among the host of women poets of her day, whom the fashion for learning had set scribbling and rhyming, she stands out possessed of the gift of genuine poetic feeling and expression.

After the shock of her husband's death she had retired to the nunnery of San Silvestro at Rome—a familiar place, for it was under the special patronage of the Colonna family. Here she spent the first days of her widowhood in sad seclusion. She would even have taken the veil and remained for life with the sisterhood, but the Pope forbade it. Afterwards she passed to the home of her early childhood, the castle of Marino, where her brother, Ascanio Colonna, and his wife welcomed her, but Ischia was peculiarly associated in her mind with her husband, and there she spent the early years of her widowhood, dwelling in the past with lamenting memory. Her grief made Nature itself faded and sad to her. Like Isabella, that other Italian of story, watering her basil with her tears, 'She forgot the stars, the moon, the sun, the blue above the trees.'

'If Misery was ever seen in sorrow and pain, I am she, in black grief and black dress, living only on tears,' she wrote, pouring out her sorrow into her poems. Grievous distractions came from the outside; the war with the Pope in which her own family was deeply associated, the sack of Rome in 1527, distressed her utterly. She roused herself to do all in her power to mitigate the suffering and ruin which the war had

brought on so many, devoting her fortune to relieve and ransom prisoners. In the terrors and confusions of the time, 'she seemed like a star of peace in the midst of the perturbed sky.'

It seems as if the pride with which she, as a Colonna, had bade farewell to her husband and brothers going forth on their campaigns, had now given way to a sense of the woes and havoc of war. In one of her poems she dreams of life as in the golden age. 'When the well-born lived in peace on white milk and green herbs, content with poor fare, the grand sound of the trumpet of war among armed bands was never heard, nor the voice of the anvil resounding to the making of arms; nor did men indulge the bold design of acquiring fame and honour; nor give to others terrible sufferings with doubts and fears. . . . But they lived contented to turn up the stubborn earth with the plough, watching their dear flocks feeding together. . . . How much better it is to sleep on the grass in the shade than to sleep on gilded beds with purple curtains—to feel the heart tranquil, cheerful and pure, rather than to hear, with choicest music, the roar of marching arms!'

Her later poems are more specially concerned with religious subjects. In 1538 a collection of her sonnets was published at Parma without her knowledge. Her verses were doubtless handed about among her friends and the literary celebrities with whom she corresponded. Thus we read that Michelangelo had a little book bound in parchment containing one hundred and three sonnets which she had given him; afterwards she sent him forty more, which he had bound with the others; he used to lend them to friends, but jealously, for he wrote to her that in possessing and reading them, he was 'encircled with Paradise.'

She steadfastly refused all proposals of a second marriage, but as the years went on we can see her sweet and stately figure making brief appearances in the great world of her time, or joining in the pleasant intimacy of her inner circle of friends. She was both famed as a poetess, and honoured for the purity and dignity of her life. Like many of the intellectual women of her day, she was as ardent a reformer as she was a good churchwoman. She was interested in the 'new' doctrines, like Marguerite d'Angoulême, Queen of Navarre, and the Duchess Renée of Ferrara. Both these ladies were her friends. Marguerite, who valued her spiritual counsel in correspondence, addressed a sonnet to her, beginning:

> 'Oh! happy thou whose ardent spirit flies
> Unto our Lord to whom thy heart is bent,
> And kindlest all with thee to wait intent
> On Him who keeps us always in His eyes.'

She visited the Duchess Renée at Ferrara, where, though she travelled in 'humble state with only six waiting-women,' she was received with great distinction. The two ladies had much in common, and we are told that Vittoria's charm and gentleness made her specially beloved by women. Afterwards, when Renée sat alone, banned as a heretic, mingling her tears with her wine, she lamented 'the mountains between her and her friends,' remembering the pleasant intercourse she had had with the Marchesa di Pescara.

The famous preaching monk, Bernardino Ochino of Siena, was drawing crowds of eager listeners everywhere, and the friends of reform within the Roman Church hoped great things from his labours. He too was one of Vittoria's friends, as were other great churchmen, Cardinal Bembo, Contarini the Venetian. of whom it

was said 'that nothing which the human mind could discover by its own powers of investigation was unknown to him; and nothing wanting to him that the grace of God has imparted to the human soul.' He is said to have been the first to solve the problem which puzzled men when the ship *Vittoria*, having made the first voyage round the world, entered port a day later than the reckoning on her log-book showed. Reginald Pole, whose name is darkened in England by unhappy association with Queen Mary Tudor, was, in Italy, a friend of progress, and another intimate in this circle. Among them all—philosophers, poets, and cardinals, we see Vittoria moving like a queen. The populace, too, recognised and loved her. When her friend Bishop Ghiberto sent begging her to visit him at Verona, the Duke of Ferrara, whose guest she was at the time, said the people of Ferrara would rise and stone him if he allowed the adored Marchesa to leave the city. She travelled frequently; she even crossed the Appennines and journeyed to Ratisbon—for what reason is not clear—but a letter she wrote from that place to the Pope was so much admired that His Holiness caused it to be read aloud to the Consistory of Cardinals. She had dreamed, as many pious souls did, of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but her friends dissuaded her from attempting so perilous a journey:—

> 'I feel the flowering hope within me rise,
> Which I had withered thought and dead to be,
> That Holy but neglected Land to see
> Which the Great Tomb adorns and glorifies.'

It was in Rome that she met the great sculptor Michelangelo Buonarroti—'the master of the live stone' as the Florentines called him—about the year 1538. Closer intimacy with him came later. He was at work

on the fresco in the Sistine Chapel—the 'Last Judgment'—often hampered and irritated by the advice and interference of the Pope, who had commissioned him, and who found him terrible in his genius and intractability. His fierce pride could recognise no superior. Pope Clement VII. said, 'When Buonarroti comes to see me I always take a seat and bid him be seated, feeling sure that he will do so without leave or licence.' He was now an old man nearing seventy, worn with his exhausting labours; for, when the fury of creation came upon him, and he smote the marble to release the living form he saw imprisoned in the stone, he wrought like one in frenzy, so that the splinters flew from his chisel as if three men were working. In his austere loneliness, 'without cheer of sister or of daughter,' without love of woman, hardly even of friend ('I have no friends,' he said; 'I need none, I wish for none'), he seems to incur Dante's reproach as being one of those who 'wilfully lived in sadness.' It is a wonderful tribute to Vittoria's noble and gracious character that she charmed and soothed this lion-heart, so that 'out of the strong came forth sweetness.' In a sonnet addressed to her, he compares himself to a rough clay model, from which the craftsman works:

> 'Thus my own model I was born to be—
> The model of that nobler self, whereto
> Schooled by your pity, lady, I shall grow.
> Each overplus and each deficiency
> You will make good.'

After her death he wrote:

> 'Her soul that fashioned mine hath sought the skies:
> Wherefore unfinished I must meet my end,
> If God, the Great Artificer denies
> That aid which was unique on earth before.'[1]

[1] Translated by J. Addington Symonds.

We know that this friendship with Vittoria brought happiness and something of serenity to the evening of Michelangelo's life. 'Health and content, heart's ease and peace of mind' he found in 'that glad angel's face so full of rest,' surely referring to her. When she was at Viterbo he wrote to her from Rome with such frequency that she begged him to 'restrict himself a little,' as his long letters distracted her from her religious duties in the convent in which she was staying, and she thought his work at Rome must also suffer. They exchanged sonnets. One of her admirers says 'that her power over this wonderful man caused him to gain a fourth crown by the verses he wrote to her.' He sent her a drawing of a study for the Crucifixion, which pleased her greatly. It was in corresponding about this that he wrote: 'It has been my earnest wish to perform more for you than for any one I ever knew upon the world. . . . Moreover, knowing that you know that love needs no taskmaster, and that he who loves doth not sleep . . . though I seemed to have forgotten, I was doing what I did not talk about in order to effect a thing that was not looked for.'

The antagonism which embroiled the Colonnas with successive popes made it difficult for Vittoria to remain in Rome, but we have a very interesting account by a Spanish painter, Francesco d'Ollanda, of his meeting with her there, and with Michelangelo. It was a Sunday afternoon, in the church of San Silvestro. Through the gardens on the hillside the Marchesa came from the convent where she was staying, to meet her friends—Claudio Tolomei, distinguished in letters, and Ochino the great preacher—in the pleasant coolness of the sacristy of the church. Fra Ambrogio (as Ochino was called) was to give an exposition on the Epistles of

St. Paul, and Tolomei had invited d'Ollanda to join the company. He had been eagerly seeking the company of Michelangelo, whose friendship he desired more than the favour of the richest nobles. 'If I met him in the papal palace or in the street, the stars would often come out in the sky before I let him go again.' He keeps a minute account of this red-letter day.

'I entered: they asked me to take a place, and the reading and exposition of the Epistles were continued. When it was ended the Marchesa spoke, and, looking at me and Tolomei, she said, "I am not quite wrong if I imagine that Messer Francesco would rather listen to Michelangelo upon painting than Fra Ambrogio upon the Pauline Epistles."

'"Madame," I replied, "your Eccelenza seems to entertain the opinion that everything which is not painting and art is foreign and unintelligible to me. It will certainly be very agreeable to me to hear Michelangelo speak, but I prefer Fra Ambrogio's expositions of the Epistles of St. Paul." I had spoken with some pique.

'"You need not take it so seriously," interrupted Tolomei; "the Marchesa certainly did not mean that a man who is a good painter is not good for anything else. We Italians rank art too high for that. Perhaps the words of the Marchesa were intended to intimate that, besides the enjoyment we have had, the other, of hearing Michelangelo speak to-day, is still in store for us."'

The delighted painter replied with a bow that Her Excellency always granted people a thousand times more than they asked. The Marchesa, smiling, said that 'here giving and receiving afforded equal enjoyment.' She had beckoned to an attendant. 'Do you

know Michelangelo's dwelling? Go and tell him that Messer Tolomei and I are here in the chapel, where it is beautifully cool. The church, too, is private and agreeable, and that I beg to ask whether he is inclined to lose a few hours here in our society, and to turn them into gain for us. But not a word that the gentleman from Spain is here.' The servant went on his errand while d'Ollanda and the friar sparred with one another as to how the great artist was to be drawn out. How brusque—how brutal almost—he could be in speech, when he was irritated, or approached by people he did not like, many stories testify. Almost immediately they heard a knocking at the door; it was Michelangelo, whom the messenger had met in the street, and who readily fell into the trap that had been set for him. As the Marchesa rose to her stately height to receive him, and remained standing and talking for some time, he did not at first notice d'Ollanda apart in the shadows. The stranger remarked with what ease the lady led the conversation, 'without touching even remotely upon painting. She wished to give Michelangelo confidence. She proceeded as if approaching an unassailable fortress so long as he was on his guard. But at last he yielded.' She talked of her plans of building a new convent on Monte Cavallo, 'where the tower stands from which Nero looked down on the burning city. The footsteps of pious women are to efface the traces of the wicked.' This at once interested him. He thought the old wall and tower might be used in the new building—the tower to hold the bells—and proposed viewing the place on the way home. From this the talk slid naturally into such subjects as d'Ollanda wished to hear discussed, among others the different schools of painting. 'Art belongs to no land, it comes from

heaven,' Michelangelo said, while Tolomei contributed an anecdote about the Emperor Maximilian who, when he pardoned an artist condemned to death, had said, 'I can make earls and dukes, but God alone can make a great artist.' They stayed talking until it was late. Characteristically, it was Michelangelo who broke up the company. He rose first, then the Marchesa stood up, and the little party of friends walked together to the gates. D'Ollanda escorted the lady to her retreat in the nunnery and hurried home to set down his recollections of the day.

Many such meetings there must have been, for it is recorded that she used to come to Rome 'for no other purpose but to see Michelangelo.' The affection between two such noble natures was a very wonderful and beautiful thing. The fires of passion were long burnt out; the love that Vittoria Colonna inspired was one that led heavenwards. It was 'her love,' he wrote, 'that winged my labouring soul and sweetened fate.'

The last years of her life were darkened by the loss of friends upon whom she had greatly leaned, and by the troubles which fell upon the Church. Efforts at compromise with the Lutherans, and at reforming the Church from within failed. Vittoria saw many of those friends who had shared her hopes and opinions, dead, or in exile, or under suspicion as heretics. She herself clung to the Roman Church as the ark outside which there is no safety, but she lamented the triumph of the reactionary policy, which stifled thought and freedom. In spite of her holy life and her loyalty to the Church, she had to suffer the watchful suspicion of the Inquisition now set up in the papal city. Her health failed, and she retired to the convent of St. Anna at Rome. She still composed poems relieving

her heart in the sorrows that befell her. Religion more and more occupied her thoughts. Her last grief was the death of her adopted son, the Marchese del Vasto, in Africa, where he had gone on a military expedition with the Emperor Charles v. It was his dread of the fatigues and perils for her of the journey to Palestine, that had induced her to give up her intention of a pilgrimage. Now she sees him with his 'first true mother in the spacious fields of heaven in glory walk,' and prays him not to forget her, old and enfeebled.

She continued to see Michelangelo to the last. When she was at Viterbo, before she came to Rome for the last time, she had a serious illness which gave her friends much anxiety. Michelangelo wrote to her physician in the utmost distress, praying him to use every diligence to restore her, for 'in her life is wound up the lives of many others who receive from her their daily food of mind or of body.' She recovered and came to Rome, but of her last years in the convent of St. Anna very little is known. Early in the year 1547 she was removed from the convent to the palace of one of her relatives, the husband of Giulia Colonna. She was then in an almost dying condition. Her friends cared tenderly for her, and the love of Michelangelo waited upon her to the end. An old man, with marred face, yet with a pride above a king's, we are told how he knelt in humility and kissed her dying hand. After her death he roused himself from his stupor of grief to lament that he had dared only to kiss her hand and not the purity of her face. Those eyes that had seen *Dawn* and *Night* in all their awful beauty were darkened with grief for her who had been his 'lamp' on the steep path, which was the stair to heaven. But though he

mourned her for many sleepless nights and days, he had chosen 'to love that which neither years nor death can blight'—the soul of Vittoria; and her 'fair face and sweet untroubled eyes' became to him an idealised symbol of heavenly love, as we see in reading his sonnets, written, many of them, to relieve him in his intolerable sadness after her death.

The tomb of Vittoria Colonna is unknown. 'High and noble as was her cradle, she had in an equal degree a lowly grave.' The date of her death was February 1547. She had given directions that her funeral should be simple, and 'after the manner of those who die in convents,' and it is supposed that she was laid in the burial-ground of the nuns of St. Anna, in a place unmarked by any stone. But she is enshrined in the memory of a greater than she, and we quote his words in Wordsworth's translation:

> 'His hope is treacherous only whose love dies
> With beauty, which is varying every hour;
> But, in chaste hearts uninfluenced by the power
> Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower
> That breathes on earth the air of paradise.'

## JEANNE D'ALBRET, QUEEN OF NAVARRE

So many ghosts haunt that place of sinister associations, the castle of Plessis-les-Tours—made familiar to us all in *Quentin Durward*—that few people recall among them the pathetic child-figure of Jeanne d'Albret, niece of Francis I., and the sorrowful, rebellious years she spent here, longing for companionship, and for the beautiful mother she adored. It is always difficult to associate child-life with the frowning stones of those castles of old time, but there could hardly have been a more forbidding home than Plessis, with its oubliettes, its iron cages, and its great gloomy square courts, darkened still more by the memories of cruelty which cling to the whole place.

Yet here the child came who was the favourite and plaything of the court of France, '*la Mignonne des rois*'—the darling of the two kings, her father and her uncle—to live in lonely and unchildlike state until the time came when she should be suitably married. Her mother was that gifted and beautiful princess, Marguerite d'Angoulême, the favourite sister of King Francis; she married Henry II. of Albret, who was King of Navarre and Prince of Béarn in his own right, and tributary to the crown of France in respect of numerous other southern territories. The Queen of Navarre was witty and talented, a patroness of letters, and one of the first ladies of exalted rank who became impressed by the Reformed doctrines of religion.

Though her daughter Jeanne was brought up in the Roman belief and practice, there is no doubt that her mother's example influenced her in her after course. Queen Marguerite, after her marriage, continued to reside much at her brother's splendid court, of which she herself was the chief ornament. She was beloved by her brother Francis, who willingly shared with her his royal honours, though he was ready to be jealous of her husband Henry—'*Mon cousin*, there can be but one king in France!' he said more than once, in warning.

When Marguerite's little daughter Jeanne was born in the year 1528, at the palace of Fontainebleau, Francis welcomed the child with every mark of royal regard and affection. According to the custom of the time, when the infant was a month old, she was handed over to the care of one of Marguerite's ladies-in-waiting, Madame de Silly, who took the child to her pleasant home at the castle of Lonray, where Jeanne's infant years were spent in happy freedom. She had the companionship of Madame de Silly's children, and her days were not fretted with the court ceremonial, which in those times oppressed even a baby. She was very healthy and vigorous, and already showed the energy and independence which sustained her throughout her after life. Poor little Jeanne! This was the only play-time, the only real youth she ever had, and it hardly lasted till she was five years old! By this time she had become a personage of political importance, for the death of her infant brother made her the prospective heiress of the crown of Navarre, and the King of France, her uncle, was already concerning himself with schemes for her future marriage. When her parents visited the French court, she had been sent for, sometimes, to

accompany them; every one, from King Francis downwards, caressed and indulged the gay, high-spirited child. She was happy, too, in being with her mother, whom she loved and admired with all her childish heart, for Madame de Silly used to beguile the time at Lonray with talk of Jeanne's mother, making a kind of fairy-tale of Queen Marguerite and all her doings. Here she was, then, the little country-bred child of five years, living in the very heart of the fairy-tale, amid all the glitter and splendour of a mediæval court, with her own dear mother the beautiful smiling queen of it all, while behind her was the still more imposing figure of the king her uncle—a splendid personage, but yet not too great for Jeanne to play with! Her father was justly proud of the noble child whose flashing dark eyes had then none of the sadness which came into them later. She had chestnut hair, and a complexion of lovely freshness. Afterwards, she is said not to have had much beauty, but as a child she had most attractive looks. The courtiers might well call her *la Mignonne des rois* when they saw how it amused the royal uncle and father to watch the little princess at play with those young companions, whose parents had begged this privilege for them, while the gay court ladies looked on, and smiled and gossiped. In after life, when Jeanne found herself shunned and neglected at this same court, did the memory of her childish happiness ever cost her a pang? If it did, she made no sign, for her resolute soul thought the world well lost for faith and honour. Already her coming destiny was casting its shadow over her path. With what royal house was she to be allied? For the child herself it mattered little, even in the eyes of those who loved her: for the future ruler of Béarn and

Navarre it mattered much. She must not marry the emperor's son Philip, for that would give Spain a dangerous authority in the dominions of France. Neither must the chosen bridegroom be any prince already so powerful as to make him a dangerous rival to his suzerain lord the French king. So Francis argued, and when Marguerite and her husband asked leave to retire from the French court to their own principality of Béarn, he flatly refused to allow Jeanne to accompany her parents. She was a daughter of France, and must be educated under his own eye; further, he proposed to bestow her in marriage on his second son Henry, the Duke of Orleans, now a boy in his thirteenth year. This project was never carried out, for when the time came, Henry was mated with Catherine de Medici, the fateful, mysterious, Italian woman who was so often in after life to cross Jeanne's path in the dark courses of her intrigues. This unaccomplished marriage with Jeanne is one of the might-have-beens of history, which carry us far in speculating on their possible consequences.

Jeanne meanwhile had to bid farewell to her mother, not without tears in those great brave eyes that in after days flashed courage into a dispirited army. All the pleasant days of babyhood and play were over—no more games under the trees at Lonray with the Baillive's children, or romps at night in the hall, when the firelight glinted on the weapons, and the hounds lay sleeping by the hearth, with one watchful eye on the children as they chased each other round the room. For children played *tig* in those days, just as they do now. All this was over, and the shining days at court, too, all a dazzle of light and perfume, and stately figures in rich dresses. The castle of Plessis was Jeanne's home for the next

seven years. King Francis appointed a household befitting her rank. Madame de Silly continued in charge of the princess. A poet was commissioned to teach her languages and the art of verse-making—a polite accomplishment of the day, in which Jeanne never excelled, as her mother did. She had two chaplains to instruct her in her religious duties and theology, with a bishop to oversee the general course of her education, besides many other officials and attendants. In charge of her master of horse, she gained an outlet for the great physical energy which sometimes made her a terrifying playmate to the companions who did occasionally visit her. It was a sombre life for so young a thing, but Jeanne, like most children, submitted to the inevitable, and did not at first complain of being unhappy. Soon, we can gather, her bold young spirit took pleasure in measuring itself against the wisdom of these sage elders, and her *gouvernante* complained of her 'obstinacy of temper.' She was a strong-minded, persistent, truthful child, disdainful of weakness in other people, and full of quiet determination in carrying out any project she was set on. She must have been a difficult princess to manage with propriety. When she was ceremoniously scolded, she turned on her lecturers with the alarming outspokenness of a sharp-witted child, and routed them utterly. They were still more horrified at her freedom of speech to King Francis when he came to see her at Plessis, but the king liked her courage, and laughed at the liberties she took. The only authority she accepted with complete submission was that of her mother, whom, present or absent, she revered. For a short time Jeanne had the companionship of her cousin, Françoise de Rohan; she was a gentle, timid creature, and she must often have quailed

before her formidable cousin, who did not hesitate to knock her about, as if they had been boys at play. A game with Jeanne must have been a good deal like one with a young panther. But when, after a visit from Jeanne's mother, Françoise left Plessis in the queen's train, the cousins parted with grief on both sides. Mlle. de Rohan wrote a little farewell poem to the 'hand that had so often struck (her),' which she yet 'loves and honours above everything.' It hardly sounds quite sincere; but after life proved Jeanne a faithful friend, for when Françoise de Rohan found herself in as evil a case as a woman can well be in, that same strong hand struck hard for her.

Jeanne was now growing out of the carelessness of childhood. Her vigorous mind demanded change, equal companionship,—above all, the society of her mother. The solitude of Plessis oppressed her, and she began to fret. Her tutors tried to interest her in her studies in vain. She hid herself in corners, and cried for hours together; with dishevelled hair, and cheeks dabbled with tears—her admired complexion wasted—she presents herself to us, a piteous object. She left her royal uncle's letters unanswered, and spurned his authority. Madame de Silly was in despair. King Francis at last became uneasy. He probably knew Jeanne's great independence of mind, and wished to make sure of her future while she was still young enough to be controlled.

Accordingly, one fine day, the warders at Plessis recognised the royal liveries on the huntsmen of a gallant company that wound its way along the banks of the Loire, and soon the castle gates flew open to admit the king, who had left the hunting-party, and come, accompanied only by two or three favourite

courtiers, to visit his niece. Jeanne received him with joy, for he had always been full of personal kindness to her. She was told that a weighty announcement was to be made to her. Perhaps at last she was to leave Plessis? She had guessed right; she was to leave Plessis immediately and go to join her mother at Alençon, to prepare for her betrothal and marriage to the Duke of Cleves, to whom her uncle had promised her hand.

It was an overpowering announcement to make to a child of twelve, though such contracts were common enough, and a docile maiden would have accepted the prospect with satisfaction, as one that offered more freedom. Not so Jeanne. She turned scarlet with emotion, and burst into a flood of angry tears. Then, recovering herself, she besought her uncle not to compel her to do this thing. But Francis, though he loved to bestow favours with a lordly hand, was always offended by any opposition to his will, and he turned from Jeanne with chill displeasure; after giving orders for her journey from Plessis, he departed, leaving behind him, as we may well believe, a household full of excitement and agitation.

What could a child—a girl—do against the King of France? A wren might as well withstand the boy who robs her nest. To Paris Jeanne went, where her bridegroom was presented to her. The Duke of Cleves was a German prince, a tall and handsome youth, expert in all knightly accomplishments, but he did not please his bride. She thought his behaviour to the king obsequious, and she disdained his advances to herself. King Francis was angry, the *gouvernante*, Madame de Silly, was frightened, and implored her charge to be more amiable. Jeanne was cool and

resolute through it all. She managed to get a document drawn up, declaring, with solemn protestations, that she was forced into this marriage against her will, by means of violence and constraint; this she signed, along with three witnesses. Perhaps her father secretly helped her in this. Her mother was so wholly devoted to the king her brother, that disobedience to his wishes was in her eyes a sin. She wrote him apologetic letters, as a mother who is ashamed of a bad child, begging him to forgive her 'poor daughter, whose understanding had evidently failed'; she calls her 'bold and senseless' for allowing herself to forget that 'a maiden ought to have no will of her own.' Marguerite was well aware of the political considerations that were in the king's mind, and she was anxious to clear her husband and herself of conniving at Jeanne's resistance, with a view to furthering an alliance with Spain. Probably Jeanne found it more difficult to persist against her mother than against the king. She had been sent to Alençon to be with Queen Marguerite, who plied her 'senseless' daughter with reasoning, entreaties, and at last real threats of punishment. In the end she submitted, at least outwardly, and the betrothal took place there, in the great hall of the castle. The child-bride must have had unusual self-control, for after all these distresses, she carried herself with composure and dignity, so that the onlookers wondered at her. Doubtless she schooled herself to it, with the thought that she was only acting a part.

Afterward by the king's command, the princess accompanied her mother to Châtellerault, where preparations had been made to celebrate the marriage with great splendour. All the court officials and great officers of state had been summoned to attend; pageants

were arranged; gold and jewels glittered everywhere; the ceremonies exceeded in cost and brilliance those of the coronation of the Emperor Charles v.; the king seemed determined to show that this marriage was one in which his goodwill and pleasure were peculiarly concerned, and nothing that could adorn the occasion was wanting, except happiness—for the centre of all this magnificence was a gloomy and unwilling child. Jeanne was 'attired in a robe of cloth of gold, beset with jewels. A ducal coronet encircled her brow; and the train of her mantle was bordered with ermine.' Thus richly dressed, she sat in her chair waiting for the king her uncle to conduct her to the chapel where the bridegroom stood at the altar expecting her. When the king came, she rose up obediently—then, either in a last attempt at protest and defiance, or perhaps because the child's heart of her failed suddenly, she sank down again, saying she felt weak and unable to walk in these robes, so heavy with gold and jewels. Francis, 'inexpressibly annoyed,' caused the princess to be carried to the altar in the arms of the High Constable. The king's command was obeyed with no goodwill, for the Constable was offended at what he considered an indignity to his high office.

Thus Jeanne was married, and after the ceremony came feasting and revels which lasted for more than a week. There were gay scenes by night and by day. Mock castles, built of green forest boughs, were set up in the meadow at Châtellerault, where gallant knights defended their ladies' emblems against all comers, and hermits, clad in grey or green velvet, sat in booths ready to act as guides to strangers. High-born dames, attended by dwarfs, personated nymphs and dryads, 'all ordered according to the mode and fashion of

bygone days.' There were jousts and tourneys by night and day; the encounters at night by torchlight were a novelty, and gave pleasure accordingly.

Jeanne and her bridegroom remained as far apart as ever. She was placed under her mother's care; for the Duke of Cleves, like a knight in a ballad, left his bride at the church-door, and went off to the wars when the feasting was done, promising to return to claim his wife in three years' time.

Jeanne never saw again the prince to whom she had been married. Three years afterwards, disgraced in war, he proved faithless to the French king, and Francis himself interposed to recall Jeanne when she was actually on her way, by his own command, to join the duke. The king immediately took steps to procure from the Pope a pronouncement dissolving this marriage on which he had so inexorably insisted. This was eventually accomplished in 1545, five years after the date of the ceremony. But all her life through, this unwelcome and unreal marriage remained a 'root of bitterness' to the Princess Jeanne.

The years spent under her parents' protection at Béarn were peaceful and happy ones. The cultivated taste of Queen Marguerite made the court at Pau a resort of men of learning, and friends of the Reformed doctrine were also welcome there. It was natural that an independent, questioning mind like Jeanne's should welcome the intellectual freedom which the new teaching offered, and her stern, unbending love of truth, and contempt for every kind of illusion, responded to the same austere qualities in the Reformers. Many of them had fled to Béarn as refugees, and the sacrifices they had made for their principles dignified them in her eyes. Though years passed before she professed herself

a Protestant, she was already one, almost, by nature —a strange shoot, indeed, from that Valois stem, which produced monarchs and princesses so distinguished for their love of luxury and magnificence.

Years pass, and now we see the Princess Jeanne again at the French court, under a new *régime*. Her uncle Francis I. is dead, and his son Henry II., the husband of Catherine de Medici, is King of France. Freed from the yoke of her early marriage, Jeanne's high spirits again break out. The brave, frank, Béarnese princess is liked and admired at court; Catherine de Medici, in the background, a silent, melancholy figure, under the shadow of her husband's dislike, watches her with those heavy-lidded Italian eyes that reveal nothing; she makes caressing advances to her royal cousin. Jeanne is friendly, but proud too, and as blunt as a schoolboy. It amuses her to unmask little falsenesses in Catherine's flatteries, before her very face. The queen says little; perhaps there is a gleam in the veiled eyes, but her velvet manner is as smooth as ever. It was a court where they all watched each other, with furtive glances, shot edgeways from jealous eyes. We can see this stamped on their faces in Clouet's portraits, unless we are misled by a mannerism of the painter.

The kings are busy again with the marrying of Jeanne. There is a place for her on the Spanish throne, but France is opposed to this. Two suitors for her hand come forward, Francis, Duke of Guise, and Antoine de Bourbon, Duke of Vendôme. Both men are brilliant and accomplished, and of rank to marry with the most exalted. Antoine, as a prince of royal blood, takes highest place in the kingdom, after the dauphin and his brothers.

Jeanne chose Antoine. Love must have blinded her clear judgment, for though handsome and charming, he was weak and vacillating in character, and intensely pleasure-loving. He was very popular at court, where he set the fashion in dress and ornaments; no one made an obeisance to a lady, or led off a dance with such grace and elegance, as M. de Vendôme. In religion he was a Lutheran, but he was unstable in this as in all else, for he is said to have changed his belief five times before he died.

Their wedded happiness did not last long. After the usual festivities, at first, all went well. Jeanne, who was now twenty years of age, made a tour of her father's dominions, to show herself and her husband to the people, who hailed her with joy as their prospective sovereign. Antoine, who enjoyed and understood the art of popularity, behaved with tact and charm. In Béarn, where the Reformed religion was in the sun of court favour, patronised by Queen Marguerite, he found it easy to win applause by his profession of the same views. The States of the principality found him such an admirable prince that they readily agreed to accept him, along with his consort, as the recognised successors of Henry and Marguerite. While his duchess Jeanne occupied herself with grave great things—the questions of theology, on which men's minds were divided, philosophy, and history—her husband amused himself in ways that were neither dignified nor wise. This was specially so after the death of Queen Marguerite, whose fascinations had a strong hold upon her son-in-law. Perhaps he felt more at ease with her than with his strenuous wife, whose temperament was so remarkably at variance with his own. For *la reine Marguerite* could always be

amusing. Neither old age, nor the close-drawn widow's drapery she wears, can lend austerity to that shrewd old woman's face, with its well-marked Valois features, which looks at us from among the other portraits of the illustrious personages of her century. Yet Antoine was proud of Jeanne, and loved her after his own fashion; and if he had allowed himself to be guided by her, he would not have died, miserable and alone, after making himself a tool in the hands of her enemies and his own.

But all this was yet to come. Jeanne was consoled after her mother's death by the birth of her eldest son, a very welcome event to the old King of Navarre and his subjects, as it secured the succession. The Duchess Jeanne, who was always wholly faithful to old friends, sent for her own former *gouvernante*, Madame de Silly, and gave the little prince into her care. Madame de Silly, tremulous and gratified (she was now an old woman), took the precious baby, and retreated to Orleans, where she lived. But she was the worst person in the world to bring up a healthy child, for the chill of age had crept into her veins, and she lived in a kind of hothouse, where a breath of fresh air never entered: the walls of her room were hung with thick arras, and a great fire burnt on the hearth night and day. The baby soon began to peak and pine, suffocated in numberless wrappings. But the old Baillive persisted in her treatment. 'The little one is all right,' she said, 'it 's better *to sweat than to shiver*.' At last the duchess was told her child was dying; she came and took the poor little victim away, too late to save his life, for he died a few weeks before her second child was born. The disappointment over the death of her eldest made Jeanne resolve to have this baby—again a son—brought

up under her own eye. He became a splendid, healthy child, and, when he was some months old, she presented him with pride to his grandfather, King Henry. This was at Mont de Marsan, where the king had come to meet his daughter and son-in-law, with their infant heir. On a fatal day, a hunting expedition was arranged, to which the duke and duchess, with King Henry, went. At home, one of King Henry's gentlemen-in-waiting saw the lady who had charge of the infant prince standing with him in her arms at an open window. He went to beguile a dull moment with a little gossip and flirtation. They began to play with the child and toss him to each other. The window was open, and below it was a staircase of stone or marble. The baby fell, and struck the steps below. When Jeanne came home, she found the child asleep, drugged into unconsciousness of pain and broken bones. Next day, when the baby wailed and winced at the touch of all who came near, they talked of bewitchment, but when it died four days afterwards, the truth came out. The mother's grief was great, for she had to endure the reproaches of her father, King Henry, who blamed Jeanne bitterly for carelessness. 'God,' he said, 'would give her no more children, if she took such ill care of those she had had.' Political reasons made regrets more acute.

This was a trying year for Jeanne. She spent part of it enduring the hardships of camp-life with her husband Antoine. She had the mortification of seeing how greatly he was outshone as a commander by the Duke of Guise, whom she had rejected as a suitor in his favour. When she left the camp, she had to depend for news of her husband, and of the fortunes of the war, on the good offices of the Duchess of Guise—so

careless was Antoine of writing to her, or sending her messages.

Slowly, and with difficulty, in the depths of winter, she journeyed in a litter drawn by mules, from Compiègne to Pau, where her father received her and installed her in the apartments that had been her mother's in the royal castle. Here her third son was born, an event looked forward to with the greatest excitement by the whole country. Like King Henry, they desired that 'this one should be a true Béarnese.' This they might well claim the child to be, for the first sounds that fell on his ears were the echoes of a Béarnese song, sung verse by verse by the heroic Jeanne, under promise to her father, who fulfilled his part of the paction by handing over to her a gold box in which his will was enclosed. (This will, which might have affected the succession of her children, had given Jeanne anxiety.) 'There,' said King Henry, 'that is thine, my daughter. But this'—taking the child in his arms and folding his robe round him—'is mine.' He rubbed the infant's lips with a clove of garlic and with wine, 'to make him a true Béarnese,' and then with joy presented him to the courtiers and gentlemen, who waited to offer congratulations in the antechamber. 'A lion-cub!' he cried proudly, holding him high that all might see him—the future Great Henry who was to rule France both by right of conquest and of birth. A peasant-woman was chosen by the grandfather to be the child's nurse, and he was reared hardily in her cottage along with her own children. The tortoise-shell in which he was carried to the font for baptism may still be seen by travellers, at Pau. Not much more than a year after this, King Henry died, and the burden of sovereignty descended on his

daughter, who is known hereafter as the Queen of Navarre.

Intrigues began at once at the French court, where the king and courtiers knew only too well how to play on the weakness and vanity of King Antoine, as he was now entitled to be called. He was plied with skilful flatteries; the homage offered to his new rank gave him intense gratification. Schemes were set on foot to break up Jeanne's dominions, and join the principality of Béarn to the crown of France.

King Henry of France was actually setting out to receive in person the adhesion of the States (or parliament) of Béarn, when Jeanne delivered her counter-stroke. She had taken up her abode with her husband in her ancestral castle of Pau, and here preparations for her coronation were hastily pushed on. The commissioners sent by Henry to receive her abdication as queen had to depart in fear of their lives from the anger of the populace, who were roused furiously against the pretensions of the King of France. Day by day they used to gather in patient crowds round the castle to get a glimpse of her whom they called 'Our Jeanne.'

The castle of Pau was full of treasures. Jeanne may well have been indignant at the plotting that would have taken from her the heritage of her fathers and this splendid home, full of associations of her mother, where also her son had been born, who was the centre of all her hopes.

Her presence-chamber was hung with crimson satin embroideries, sewed by the late queen herself, and the whole great house was made rich and beautiful by Marguerite's taste and knowledge. We may still read the general inventory made of the *meubles* of the castle

of Pau: the contents of the jewel-chambers sound like the treasure-cave of a fairy-tale. Great chests stood against the wall, each labelled with the name of a saint—one was Ste. Marguerite, another was St. John. They contained rare and curious things—rings, and charms of power, cups of agate studded with gems, reliquaries, ewers of silver gilt, mirrors set in frames jewelled with diamonds, besides ornaments for wear and for the decoration of the table at feasts, such as 'a demoiselle of gold, represented riding upon a horse of mother-of-pearl, standing upon a platform of gold, enriched with ten rubies, six turquoises, and three fine pearls.' Such costly *bijoux* pleased the taste of the age. Jeanne valued them little, except as the accompaniment of her rank and state, which she *did* value. 'For myself, it is not my intention to hazard the little remnant that remains to me of the territories of the kings, my predecessors,' she once said, in anger, over some of Antoine's indiscretions. Yet, when the time came, she threw all, and life itself, into the hazardous scale of battle, and trusted God to defend the right. As Antoine and she passed from room to room in the castle, surveying its wealth, their son was brought to them. He was a noble child, fearless-eyed, and tanned with sun and wind. Jeanne wept over him for joy, and, as she presented him to his father, who saw him for the first time, she vowed again to defend his rights to the last.

Then came the stately coronation in the presence of people and nobles in the great hall of the castle. At this time Jeanne was still in outward observance a good Catholic, and went regularly to Mass, though she privately studied theology and questions of Church reform and government. Antoine's light-hearted inter-

ference in these matters was the cause of no little trouble among her Catholic subjects, for Catholics and Protestants were mutually jealous and intolerant of each other's liberties. But step by step she was carried on, from sympathy and toleration, to a public avowal of her adhesion to the Reformed faith.

But much water was to run under the bridge before this took place. We see Jeanne come and go to the French court, consulted by Catherine over the marriage of her son to Mary Stuart of Scotland, the niece of the Guises. That powerful faction has raised its head higher than ever, threatening all France, even the throne itself. In spite of Catherine's opposition and Jeanne's arguments, King Henry consents, and the marriage takes place. Jeanne walks in the wedding procession among the foremost, by her side the little princess of France who is, on an ill-omened day, to be her son's bride. At the feast, she sits beside the king; on his other hand, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, now Dauphiness of France, casts on her neighbour her sidelong, fascinating glance. Dark and fearful things the future hid from these royal ladies—battle and murder and sudden death—the 'red liveries' of St. Bartholomew, and the scaffold at Fotheringhay. But Jeanne for once was gay, and danced merrily at the ball which was given after the banquet. After this she is seen in few pageants until the time comes for her to take part in the solemn pageantry of war.

In 1559 her last child is born, a daughter, who is named Catherine after the queen, who has stood godmother. Then the fatal tournament befell when King Henry falls under a lance-stroke; the struggle for the government of France begins between the queen-mother, Catherine de Medici, and her sons, with the

two great houses of Bourbon and of Lorraine (the Guises). Behind the Guises is the secret influence of Spain and the Catholic reaction. The great party of the Huguenot nobles claims Antoine de Bourbon ('Our Jeanne's' husband), and his brother the Prince of Condé, as their leaders. Through the troublous times that follow we see Antoine—a weak, unstable figure, called by right of his birth to a great position he could not fill—browbeaten by the Guises, cajoled by the queen-mother, bribed and befooled by the King of Spain into the basest treachery to his wife and children. It is difficult to unravel the web of political intrigue of which the court of France was the centre, but Catherine de Medici's ruling principle gives us a clue—'*Il faut diviser pour regner.*' She set herself to play off the Guises against the Huguenot nobles and the King and Queen of Navarre, and throughout the unhappy years when plot and counterplot were followed by civil war, we can see how she sided now with one party, now with another, often throwing the weight of her influence *against* the strongest for the time being. Perhaps she could not always help herself, for she was feminine and opportunist in her policy. She could shape her course better to follow events than to lead them.

The death of the king, her son Francis, at that dramatic moment when the Prince of Condé lay in prison under sentence of death, and the Guises plotted to take Antoine's life also, changed the face of affairs entirely, and played into the hands of Catherine. The Guises were checked, and she became Regent of France during the minority of her son Charles IX. She bargained for the support of the fickle Antoine by making him lieutenant-general of the kingdom in all

military matters, and promising him that 'nothing should be ordained in the kingdom generally without his advice and assent.'

Jeanne meanwhile had been watching events with anxious eyes. She had strengthened the bolts and bars of her fortresses, and retired with her children to the castle of Navarreins for safety. Her proud heart had been humbled by the account of her husband's behaviour when Francis and the Duke of Guise had received him with studied insult—how he had meanly swallowed their affronts, and cringed before the duke. Now, when he wrote to her, boasting of his new dignities, she could take little pleasure in the prospect.

At home, her hands were full of cares. She had resisted the powers of the Inquisition in her dominions, by refusing to allow cases of heresy to be tried and judged by any but herself as sovereign princess, though such cases might be reported to her Privy Council. She refused to hand over to the law six Reformed ministers, who were accused of sedition against France. How imperious she could be in declaring and defending her sovereign rights and her opinions, we know from the angry letter she wrote—years after this—to the Cardinal d'Armagnac, the Pope's legate, in reply to the admonitions he had addressed to her on her support of the Reformed religion. After denying various allegations he has made, she goes on—'As to what you remark respecting the books of the ancient Fathers, I hear them constantly quoted by our ministers, and approve them. Nevertheless, I own that I am not so learned as I ought to be in this matter, but neither do I believe that you are more competent than myself, having observed that you have applied yourself more to the study of politics than to that of divinity.

. . . You request me not to think it strange, nor to take in bad part what you have written. Strange I do not deem your words, considering of what order you are; but as to taking them in bad part, that I do as much as is possible in this world. You excuse yourself, and allege your authority over these countries as the Pope's legate. I receive no legate here at the price which it has cost France. I acknowledge over me in Béarn God only, to whom I shall render account of the people He has committed to my care. . . . I bid you keep your tears to deplore your own errors, to which act of charity I will add my own, putting up at the same time the most earnest prayer that ever left my lips, that you may be restored to the true fold, and become a faithful shepherd instead of a hireling. I must entreat that you will use other language when next you would have me believe that you address me, impelled, as you affirm, by motives of respect; and likewise I desire that your useless letter may be the last of its kind.'

Queen Jeanne's days were passed in grave pursuits, reading law and theology, correcting her boy's Greek and Latin exercises; for recreation she sat at her tapestry-frame and worked, 'listening to the discourses of learned persons' the while. For King Antoine it was a *triste* life, and he rejoiced to find himself so well amused in the queen-mother's company, a chief personage among the three hundred beautiful ladies (the 'Flying Squadron'), who made her court attractive.

By and by Queen Jeanne joined him there, by Catherine's pressing invitation. At this time the queen-mother was apparently doing all she could to conciliate the Huguenot party: perhaps, too, in spite

of herself, amidst all the twists and windings of her policy, she desired for an ally the steadfast, unwavering Queen of Navarre. To test the sincerity of the Government in their promises of toleration, Jeanne, before she left Pau, by the advice of her council, made a public profession of her adherence to the Reformed Faith, and received the Holy Communion in the cathedral according to the new ritual.

Soon the papal nuncio at Catherine's court had doleful news to write to the Pope, of the licence allowed to the new religion: 'We have always a *prêche* going on in the apartments of some lord or lady of the court.' When he remonstrated, the queen-mother put him off with smooth words. The chief offender was the Queen of Navarre. The legate and the Spanish ambassador laid their heads together. They knew the kind of stuff Antoine was made of, and they plotted accordingly. The bait which lured him was the promise that the King of Spain would restore to him Spanish Navarre, and for this he was willing to forswear his religion, to ruin his queen Jeanne, and to betray the interests of his children. It was proposed that he should divorce his wife on the plea of her early marriage to the Duke of Cleves: she should be arrested and kept as a prisoner in one of the state fortresses. Other brides were suggested to him: Mary of Scotland was one. All this baseness Antoine was ready to put his hand to, so that even Jeanne's enemies wondered at his unworthiness. Catherine herself intervened, and begged Jeanne to make an effort to regain her ascendancy over her husband. But her spirit was too deeply wounded. 'I closed my heart,' she said, 'for ever against the affection which I had cherished for my husband, and devoted its every impulse to perform my duty.'

Warned of plots against her life and liberty, she left Paris, after taking a tearful farewell of her son, whom she was obliged to leave behind. So she rode away, with a heart full of thoughts too sad and bitter to be shared with her young daughter, 'Madame Catherine,' who rode at her side. She had an imposing escort of horsemen, provided by her Huguenot friends, and she had need of them, for she was pursued by treachery. Only the timely warning of a friend saved her, as she was passing through her husband's territories: she had to rise from a sick-bed, and gallop to the frontier, to gain the shelter of her own principality, while behind her sounded the trumpets of the soldiers sent to take her prisoner.

After this, Jeanne lived with the din of battle constantly in her ears. The Reformation in France had perhaps a greater hold of the aristocracy than of the common people: many of the nobles were Huguenots, with the feudal instinct for war. If the King of France could not or would not defend his Huguenot subjects, they would defend themselves; but they did not, in theory at least, question his supremacy. They led their armed vassals into the field, and a ruinous, indeterminate warfare went on, in which neither party won supremacy. One rising followed another. Catherine de Medici tried to steer a middle course, but her good faith was doubted by Catholics and Protestants alike. In these wars King Antoine died, with little glory or comfort, either to soul or body. At the last, he longed for Jeanne's presence, and sent her an honest letter of farewell. No one mourned him. The Pope's legate, who had laid such evil snares for this 'King Turnabout' as they called him, wrote the news of his death with a sneer.

As a widow, the Queen of Navarre was more than ever exposed to the plots of the popish party. These began with offers of marriage, to be arranged by the King of Spain, and ended in a plan, which might well have succeeded, to seize Jeanne along with her children and hand them over as prisoners to the Inquisition, where her life would have paid the penalty. But she never blenched from the course she had taken. Years before, she had written—'To obtain for all men liberty of conscience, I am minded to do good battle, and not to relax my efforts. The cause is so holy and sacred that I believe God will strengthen me by His mighty power.'

Yet her position was far from secure, for there was discontent among her Roman Catholic subjects, and they had every encouragement to throw off their allegiance to a sovereign whom the Pope had excommunicated, and whose heirs he threatened to declare illegitimate. Here, however, Catherine had interposed. She had no mind to let the Pope make and unmake sovereign princes, still less to see the Queen of Navarre's dominions handed over to the King of Spain. This inscrutable woman was constantly stirring up trouble for Jeanne, yet this was by no means the only time she interfered on her behalf.

But Catherine's policy became more and more entangled with the Guises, and her treatment of heresy became more severe. She tried to inveigle Jeanne out of the safety of her principality, to visit the court, on the pretext of making terms of permanent peace, with the intention of keeping her a prisoner: she sent secret orders to one of her generals to entrap and seize the Huguenot leaders. War broke out afresh. Jeanne had skilfully succeeded in withdrawing her son from

the wardship of Catherine. She found him well trained in gallant accomplishments—he rode well, danced and wrestled, knew French, Spanish, and Italian literature. Under his mother's influence, the soldier's heart in him woke. She sent him under the care of the Sénéchal of Béarn to suppress an insurrection, that he might learn what war was like. She wrote to her friend the Viscount de Gourdon, 'My son shows himself to be a lover of truth, and of arms. You will find him tall for his age. I pray you, hold frequent intercourse with him on the subjects of religion, controversy and war, in which matters you are expert and the prince eager.' Nothing could be more characteristic of the queen's own mind. Since her husband left her side, these austere high matters—Religion, Controversy, War—had greatly absorbed her, and now they claimed everything. She resolved to leave her kingdom, and openly join the Huguenot forces at La Rochelle.

She was then at Nérac. Monthuc, the French marshal, was watching her every movement and reporting to Paris. The queen, well aware of this, continued to exchange stately courtesies with him and with Madame de Monthuc. In early September, all being ready, Queen Jeanne one day sent an invitation to madame to visit her, with her eldest son, that Prince Henry and he might run a course at the ring. On the morning of the day appointed, the castle was early astir: before day broke, the courtyard was full of men and horses; baggage-mules were being loaded; the queen's litter stood ready as if for a journey. In the chapel Queen Jeanne was kneeling in prayer with her son: together they received the Communion. Thus armed for her enterprise, she came forth, resolute and calm, smiling even, as she saw her gallant son putting

himself at the head of the troop who had gathered to escort her. There were about fifty of them, gentlemen all: in the half-dark of early morning she could recognise the faces of her friends. The Princess Catherine took her place beside her mother, and the cavalcade moved quietly through the gates. They were out of the town, and far into the country in the dewy stillness of the early morning, before any one knew they had gone. Jeanne had been quietly making preparations at every point, though she took no one into her full confidence. Those about her could only guess, from her guarded reserve, that some deep plan was forming in her mind. But now her silence and preoccupation were gone; her brow was clear, her spirits high. As for Prince Henry, could any adventure have been more entirely to his liking—the stolen march, the haste and secrecy! He was in command too, and as they rode along 'with bit and bridle ringing,' the boy's heart must have danced within him.

Probably the older men in the company were anxious enough, and with good cause. Their watchful eyes soon saw a body of cavalry bearing full down upon their path. 'Montluc's men!' they cried, and a halt was called. They closed up round the queen, and got their weapons ready. The strangers drew quickly nearer, until at last the device on their banner became visible, and a shout of welcome broke from Jeanne's escort, as they hailed the standard of her trusted officer the Sénéchal of Armagnac. The danger of the way was now greatly lessened. This rencontre was no stroke of mere good luck, but was due to the careful foresight with which the queen had made her plans. As she continued her journey, she was met by further large reinforcements, until she finally entered Bergerac

at the head of a small army. Here she rested until she could communicate with Condé.

When an elegant chamberlain appeared at Montluc's quarters at Agen to say that the queen regretted she could not receive Madame de Montluc, as she had to leave Nérac on pressing business, his anger knew no bounds. To keep the Queen of Navarre under constant surveillance, and, if possible, to lure her into danger, had been his chief mission. He sent out furious messengers to raise the country after her, and if possible, intercept her. But Jeanne escaped. Four hours after she had left Castle Jaloux, her first halting-place, the furious marshal clattered into it in pursuit, but she was now across the Dordogne, and beyond his reach. From Bergerac she wrote to Charles IX., declaring that she was taking up arms 'for his honour and service,' and to defend his subjects of the Reformed faith from their enemies, who were determined to destroy them.

By the end of September, Queen Jeanne made her entry into La Rochelle, the Huguenot citadel, in state. She rode on horseback, with her son riding on her right hand, and Condé on her left. The mayor and town authorities met her, and, kneeling, presented her with the keys of the city. After them came a cavalcade of noble ladies, who fell into rank behind the queen as she rode through the streets, where the inhabitants were shouting their welcome. In the afternoon she received in audience the officials of the town: grave and eloquent harangues were exchanged. She presented to them her son, the Prince of Béarn, who said, 'Messieurs de la ville, I cannot speak eloquently, as you do, but I can act!' Every one was charmed with the prince. 'He is, I assure you, a most lovable

creature,' one wrote, 'agreeable, affable, and obliging. He receives his friends with a most noble and gracious air . . . in all things acts as becomes a great prince.' With her own hands his mother fastened on his armour, and sent him forth to the war with her heroic counsels ringing in his ears. She knew that all might end in ruin and death, but 'I have a work to perform,' she said, 'and I must steel my heart to fulfil its demands.'

The burden she had lifted was heavy. In the queen's hands were the civil administration of La Rochelle, 'the management of the finances of the confederate nobles, the conduct of negotiations with the court of France and with foreign cabinets, and the general supervision of the allied forces.' Had ever woman such a task? She was Governor of the City, War Minister, and Secretary for Foreign Affairs all in one. We do not wonder to read that her nights were broken and sleepless. During the day, while she was engaged with public affairs, her energy and acuteness amazed everybody, but when she retired in the evening to her own apartments, she sat brooding, exhausted, silent. Her physical constitution was giving way. Yet as the months went on, her efforts never flagged. 'She ruled with consummate wisdom, propitiating all parties, providing for the efficient victualling of the garrisons of the confederates, and forwarding almost daily large supplies of food and provision to the army of the princes. Her energy and decision were held marvellous: the queen superintended all things often in person; and attended by a staff of officers, she visited the port, and every part of the town. She daily held council, and ordained all matters relating to the finances of the confederates.'

Success attended the Huguenot arms: help came

from the Lutheran princes in Germany, and from Elizabeth in England. Many letters had passed between the two queens, both strong, fearless women, born to rule; but Jeanne had infinitely less instinct for *finesse* than Queen Elizabeth. The treasures of Pau were now being scattered, for money to carry on the war was advanced by the English queen, on the security of jewels of great value forwarded by Jeanne. There was a wonderful necklace, an heirloom of the House of Albret, 'set with eleven large table diamonds, valued at 160,000 crowns'; a ring set with 'a large balas ruby,' valued at 6000 crowns, was also pawned, along with many other precious things.

The battle of Jarnac brought the hopes of the confederate princes to the ground. They were defeated, and Condé was taken prisoner, and afterwards killed. Grief for his loss plunged the Huguenot army into dejection and despair. Coligny's efforts to revive courage and discipline were vain, and his last hopes were placed upon the Queen of Navarre. He sent an urgent message to her, but she was already on her way from La Rochelle, with the two young princes, Condé's son and her own. The whole army was drawn in battle array to receive her. As she rode along the lines, and marked the gloomy faces, the trailing banners, the fleurs-de-lis masked in crape, her spirit indeed might have failed, too, for well she knew the loss, and how ill they could spare the dead prince. Condé's son, riding beside her, wept aloud for his father. But 'that high heart, that lofty and resolute spirit' did not give way. Encouraged by her very look, the ranks began to cheer.

'Soldiers!' she cried, 'while I, the queen, still hope, is it for you to fear? You weep for Condé,

but does the memory of Condé demand nothing but tears?'

She poured forth eloquent and moving words; the soldiers shouted; artillery was fired. Before them all she caused young Condé to take the same oath her son Prince Henry had taken, vowing himself to the cause. Together she presented the young princes as brothers-in-arms to the assembled troops, and the men dispersed to their quarters, once more full of hope and confidence.

It is only one incident of many. When reverses came and leaders quarrelled, it was the heroic queen who restored order; and not only in council and in war did she give proof of her qualities, for, when the brave La Noue, most valiant and most trusted of leaders, lay dying, as they feared, of a mortifying wound, it was her wisdom and tenderness that saved his life. He would not allow the surgeons to amputate, until the queen with gentle reasoning persuaded him: she herself supported him during the operation, encouraging him with her own courage; and when he was happily recovered, she sought out a famous 'machinist,' who invented an iron arm, so that this brave soldier could still guide his horse. Hence he was called La Noue Bras-de-Fer. In after life, La Noue, a hard, grizzled soldier, 'could not speak of the Queen of Navarre without tears.'

The war dragged on: there was revolt and trouble in Jeanne's own dominions, stamped fiercely out by Montgomery. A succession of victories brought overtures from the French court; doubt and mistrust were on both sides, but negotiations continued. Concessions were wrung from Catherine and her party; apparently the young King Charles IX. was trying to

free himself from the influence of his mother and her councillors. He was bitterly jealous of his younger brother, the Duke of Anjou, and it seems as if he had never shaken off a youthful affection for his cousin, Prince Henry of Navarre. As boys they had played together. 'Henry alone of all my royal house loves me, and I love him,' the poor weak king often cried in defiance to his mother. Perhaps, suffocated with the falseness which hung like a cloud round Catherine de Medici and her court, he thought with longing of the brave, frank truthfulness of Queen Jeanne and her son.

The Peace of St. Germain was proclaimed, and the bells of La Rochelle rang merry peals. The people cheered for King Charles, for the Queen of Navarre, and the prince. But Jeanne's brave heart was full of unquiet fears. 'Can the queen (Catherine) who never pardons, pardon me?' she said, in sombre tones, when messages came inviting her presence at court. La Rochelle was still a Huguenot fortress, and warlike stores continued to arrive. Catherine was dissatisfied, and pressed for the disbandment of the confederate forces. Another commissioner was sent to the Queen of Navarre to urge her into a more friendly attitude, and to propose a treaty of marriage between the Prince of Béarn and the Princess Marguerite de Valois, the king's sister. This was brought forward as the fulfilment of a promise made by the late King Henry, when the two were children, and now King Charles was eager for it. 'In this way I will marry the two religions,' he said. Jeanne doubted. She was ambitious for her son, as Catherine well knew, and thus she thought to gain Jeanne, for most of her art lay in discerning the weakness of those with whom she had to do. The whole land was crying out for peace.

Coligny and the Huguenot nobles trusted the king, and at last Jeanne withdrew her opposition, though the very splendour of the alliance roused her misgivings. *Why* did King Charles and his mother press this match? The question is hard to answer. Perhaps jealousy of Spain had to do with it. Difficulties with the two religions, with the Pope's sanction—all were to be got over. Queen Jeanne raised objections; Queen Catherine smoothed them away.

But when the Queen of Navarre at last consented to leave her dominions and come to Tours, where she met Catherine and her daughter Madame Marguerite—the future bride, beautiful and indiscreet—the marriage negotiations took another turn, and Queen Jeanne, weary and disheartened, would fain have renounced the whole project, as Rosny advised her to do—'Return to your own country, madame,' he said, 'for believe me, if this marriage takes place at Paris, the liveries worn on the occasion will be blood-coloured.'

'I assure you, my son,' she wrote, 'that I am in great trouble, for they taunt me without mercy, and I have need of all the patience in the world.' But the king was still eager, and at Blois he received Jeanne as if with the affection of a son, while bells rang and cannon echoed in royal welcome. He reproached his mother for her delays, and at last declared that the marriage articles should be signed without reservation. Bride and bridegroom might settle their religious differences as they pleased. 'I honour you, *ma tante*, more than the Pope,' he said, 'and if M. le Pape demeans himself too absurdly in this affair, I promise you I will take Marguerite by the hand, and lead her to be married in full *prêche*.'

The contract of marriage was signed by the Queen

of Navarre. Prince Henry remained at Pau, by his mother's express desire, until the conference over the marriage was concluded. She wrote him letters which give intimate, charming glimpses into her reserved nature—inquiries about his favourite dogs and puppies—messages from his sister: she sent him little gifts, jewelled buttons for his hat and plume, and even added notes on the fashions at court. In the end of May she came to Paris, to take her share in the preparations of wedding magnificence. She had been generous in the wedding-contract, but she refused to be limited by a legal document in her personal gifts. The cloud of weariness and depression lifted a little in the pleasure she took in buying costly and beautiful things to gratify and adorn the bride. Goldsmiths, embroideresses, jewellers, displayed their richest wares to the Queen of Navarre, as she went on her stately 'shopping' expeditions, attended by the Governor of the City. Paris, with its fine craft and artistry, could tempt great ladies then as now, and Queen Jeanne purchased with a lavish hand. The people cheered her as she passed through the streets, as lustily as they shouted 'Kill, kill!' on the night of St. Bartholomew, a few weeks later.

She loved costly perfumes—one of the most characteristic luxuries of the time. At Master René's, the court perfumer, she bought drugs, scented gloves, ruffs, and the delicate essences he sold. Popular suspicion afterwards connected her fatal illness with her visit to this shop, but there is no evidence to justify this. She had been not much more than a week in Paris, when she came in, feeling more tired and oppressed than usual. She became feverish, racked with pain; on the second day, she knew she was dying. She desired to see her chaplains, 'for the better

settlement of her conscience.' 'I submit myself to the holy will of God,' she said; 'I have never feared death . . . I grieve only for my children.' She called to her those whom she trusted, to receive her last confidence and instructions. Coligny left her, overpowered with grief. It was noted that she never once referred to her son's approaching marriage.

After five days' illness, she died on the morning of June 9, 1572. The many Huguenot nobles and others in Paris heard the news with the deepest gloom. A report flew abroad that she had been poisoned, but the physicians' examination after her death proved that the queen's illness was due to natural causes. In truth, Jeanne died worn out with her labours of mind and body. In her forty-four years she had lived the life of three women; she had known little joy and much sorrow; her course was one long struggle for the security of her throne, her life, her religion. She was not popular with the popularity that fickle youth and beauty command; she had none of the 'adorable follies' of women. But the poor and humble of her people loved her as few princesses of her time were loved. Her nobles, and the war-leaders who were her comrades, trusted her to the death.

She is described by those who saw her in mid-life at the French court, as a grave and stately princess, with dark hair, a complexion fresh and fine, and beautiful eyes, dark and large, but very sad in their expression. Her portrait shows her, wearing a widow's coif and veil, with a string of pearls round her neck.

The French court wore decorous mourning for her. Her son's bride, Marguerite, tells in her diary how she went, accompanied by certain ladies, to pay her last duty to the Queen of Navarre. Jeanne lay on the bed

on which she had died, arrayed in a robe of white satin embroidered with silver, over which was spread a royal mantle of purple velvet. Her crown and sceptre lay beside her. In their places, as if they still waited on the queen, stood the ladies and gentlemen of her household, dressed in mourning. But the princess remarks disdainfully the *Huguenotrie* which forbade the usual 'pomps and ceremonies, no lights, no priests, no crosses, no holy water.' As they stood there, looking at that austere, still dignity, one lady—between whom and the Queen of Navarre there had been little liking—now advanced, and 'with several fine, humble, and low curtseys, approached the bed, and taking the queen's hand in her own, she kissed it; then, with another profound obeisance, she returned to our side.' This act of belated homage, half-mocking, yet with something spontaneous in it too, was wholly characteristic of the French court in its treatment of Jeanne.

'*La mort des débonnaires du Seigneur est en estime envers lui.*' With this text, in the old-fashioned, beautiful version of the 116th Psalm, Huguenot writers comforted themselves. '*La débonnaire du Seigneur*'—this great-hearted woman, 'beloved of the Lord'—was taken away from the evil to come: her eyes were spared the desolation of her people. Two months later, the marriage took place between Henry of Navarre and Marguerite. All the Huguenot nobles and gentlemen were gathered in Paris for the celebrations. Four days afterwards came St. Bartholomew, when, after a night of frenzy, Paris lay like a conquered city: the day broke on streets choked with the dead. The slain numbered thousands, and among them the flower of the Huguenot nobility and leaders perished. The

Lilies of France were red with blood. What retribution the swift years brought—years of

> '. . . sword and fire,
> Red ruin and the breaking up of laws'

—let the story tell of the passing of the Valois kings, miserable and unlamented: while the end of the Wars of Religion crowned the son of Jeanne d'Albret, Henry of Navarre, king and deliverer of France.

## RACHEL, LADY RUSSELL

RACHEL WRIOTHESLEY, afterwards Lady Russell, was born in the year 1636, in the troubled days of struggle between king and parliament in England. Her father was that Earl of Southampton who, himself a lover of liberty and English constitutional freedom, yet felt bound to defend his king against subjects in arms; and, when the end came on the scaffold at Whitehall, he was one of the four who, a week later, followed the dead king's body to Windsor, under the falling snow that gathered on the coffin, and changed its covering of black velvet to a pall of white. In his youth, abroad, he had met and married *la belle et vertueuse Huguenotte*, Rachel de Ruvigny, the daughter of an ancient and noble house in France. Her brother, the Marquis de Ruvigny, was a man eminent in the political world, as the trusted representative of the Protestant interest in France,—recognised as such both at the French and English courts.

Though Lady Southampton died not long after Rachel was born, the child had the advantage of inheriting from both parents noble traditions in duty and loyalty, in love of freedom and truth, and in religion. Her father married again, and she grew up with her elder sister Elizabeth and several step-sisters, of whom only one survived the parents. During the Commonwealth years, Lord Southampton lived in

retirement at Titchfield, his home in Hampshire, busying himself with the care of his estate and of his children, and taking no part either for or against the Government. But he was in regular correspondence with Charles II., to whom he lent large sums of money, for which his family was afterwards ill requited.

From the age of twelve till she was seventeen, Rachel Wriothesley lived the life of a well-born English country-girl—fenced about with duties and with dignities, but full of homely simple pleasures, then as now. In the charming, natural letters she wrote afterwards, there are many touches which show with what a trained watchful eye the chatelaine saw and noted all that was going on in her domains,—from the ripening of the pears on the south wall, or the plastering of the barn, to the disputes between the vicar and his bishop. English country-life, after all, remains little changed. She never was a learned lady (she spelt as badly as everybody else in those days), but her education was at least such as enabled her afterwards to undertake the teaching of her two daughters, who became the Duchesses of Devonshire and of Rutland.

In 1653, when she was seventeen, her father arranged a marriage for her with Lord Vaughan, son of Lord Carberry. It was probably one of those marriages in which, as she said afterwards, in another case, 'it is acceptance rather than choosing on either side.' In after life, when she and the Earl of Rutland were conferring over the proposed marriage between his son and her daughter Katharine, she says, 'does not your lordship think we owe this to the young couple, that they should see one another a little more than they have done (and so guess at each other's humour, before we venture to make them, as I hope they shall be, a happy couple)?'

We know little about Lord Vaughan, but Lady Rachel seems to have lived a tranquil cheerful life in her husband's family, at Golden Grove in Carmarthenshire. She was beloved by them all, as letters show, both before and after her second marriage. In 1665, a child was born of the Vaughan marriage, but it only lived to be baptized. In 1667 her husband died, probably of the Plague which was then raging, but no record remains of this. In this year also, her father, Lord Southampton, died, having held the office of Lord High Treasurer after the Restoration. He bequeathed to her his property of Stratton in Hampshire, where she was afterwards to know great happiness and great sorrow.

In her widowhood, she went to live at Titchfield, with her best-beloved sister, Lady Elizabeth Noel, to whom it now belonged. She was that 'delicious friend' whom Lady Rachel afterwards mourned: 'sure nobody has enjoyed more pleasure in the conversations and tender kindnesses . . . of a sister than myself.' A hundred years after, the country-folk in the cottages round Titchfield still talked of the unforgotten goodness of the Lady Elizabeth.

About this time William Russell, the third son of the Earl of Bedford, was coming forward into public notice. His youth had not been without some sowing of wild oats, but he appears now as a familiar and honoured type of English public man, disinterested, steadfast and honourable, not quick-witted nor eloquent, but such a man as the English people have always trusted, and who well deserved the name they gave him—the 'Patriot.'

Lady Vaughan was a great heiress, and he had at that time neither title nor fortune to offer her, but

this marriage was not one of arrangement meekly accepted, but of happiest choice on either side. They were married about the end of the year 1669. Lady Vaughan continued to bear her title until, by the death of his elder brother in 1678, William Russell became his father's heir, and was known as Lord Russell.

Their life together was one of singular—almost pathetic—happiness, as one feels in reading the letters she wrote to him when they were separate. Words almost fail her to convey her affection and longing for his return to her. She busies herself in sending him news from town when he is in the country, and in relating all the trifles and details of the moment—the meal she has just risen from, or their children's sayings and doings. Two daughters and a son were born to them—Rachel in 1674; Katharine in 1676; and Wriothesley in 1680.

Sometimes there is a grave and anxious note in these letters, when political affairs are mentioned, and she sends some shrewd hint or warning. But her ruling motive is here:

'I write this to my dear Mr. Russell, because I love to be busied in either speaking of him or to him; but the pretence I take is lest that I wrote yesterday should miscarry. . . . It is an inexpressible joy to consider I shall see the person I most and only long to be with, before another week is past; I should condemn my sense of this expected happiness as weak and pitiful, if I could tell it you. No, my best life, I can say little, but think all you can, and you cannot think (too) much: my heart makes it all good.'

Again she begins a letter from London, giving her husband all the town news:

'. . . These are the pleasing moments, in absence (of) my dearest blessing, either to read something from you or be writing something to you; yet I never do it but I am touched with a sensible regret that I cannot pour out in words what my heart is so big with, which is much more just to your dear self (in a passionate return of love and gratitude) than I can tell you.'

More than once there is something like a foreboding of what was to come: 'Absent or present, my dearest life is equally obliging, and ever the earthly delight of my soul; it is my great care (or ought to be so) as to moderate my sense of happiness here, that when the appointed time comes of my leaving it, or its leaving me, I may not be unwilling to forsake the one, or be in some measure prepared and fit to bear the trial of the other.'

Early in their married life she had written, after expressing her passionate affection for her husband: 'What have I to ask but a continuance (if God see fit) of these present enjoyments? if not, a submission, without murmur, to His most wise dispensations and unerring providence; having a thankful heart for the years I have been so perfectly contented in: He knows best when we have had enough here; what I most earnestly beg from His mercy is, that we both live so as, which ever goes first, the other may not sorrow as for one of whom they have no hope. Then let us cheerfully expect to be together to a good old age; if not, let us not doubt but He will support us under what trial He will inflict upon us.'

She often withdrew from the society she was entertaining, to scribble the day's news to her husband: 'I have silently retired to my little dressing-room for this performance, the next being full of company

at cards.' In another: 'What reputation writing this may give me, the chamber being full of ladies, I know not.' She goes on 'to my dearest man who, I trust in God, is well; but ill entertained, I fear, at Stratton, but what the good company repairs. The weather is here very ill, and the winds so high that I desire to hope you do not lie in our old chamber, being afraid when I think you do. Our little Fubs (her baby-daughter Rachel) is very well; made her usual court to her grandfather (the Earl of Bedford) just now, who is a little melancholy for his horses; but they are all sent to take the air at Kensington or somewhere out of town. My lord's gelding is dead, and more saddle-horses, and one coach-horse, I think. I have asked every one I see for news, but all I can learn is that Attorney Montague has done his best to be Chief Justice, but will fail. . . . There is such a buzz, I can so little tell what I say, that it is in vain to say more.'

From Stratton she writes with news of the children, and pleasant country things: '. . . From your little girl and I, I think myself obliged to tell you, we are both as you left us. I have just left her in as good humour as she used to be when her breakfast was before her; but while it was agetting ready, very impatient; nothing would do without the help of a piece of bread and butter. I have yet passed my time well enough since we parted; all I have done seeming to be in order to our meeting soon again; but some interruption I had about four o'clock yesterday, by the noise of a coach, which proved to be Lady Stuckley (a county neighbour). I had the satisfaction by it of seeing the new well, for going down with her, the evening was so fine, I walked to it; it is thatched all, and the foundation laid to the turning; they were

just turning it as I looked on them, and this day will not hurt it, for it is the most glorious one that is to be imagined; the sun is so hot as I write, it supplies the want of sand[1] as well as fire could do. The pears are not gathered till to-morrow morning. I do long to hear of my best life, but not so much as I shall do ten days hence, whether I am at Stratton or nearer to you. Watkins (the house-steward) calls for my letter. . . .'

Again: 'Sending your victuals by the higler,[2] I take the same opportunity to let my dearest know I have his by the coach . . . you do not in words tell me if you are very well; and your going to the House tells no more than that you are not very ill. If your nose bleeds as it did, pray let me beg of you to give yourself time to bleed in the arm. My heart, be assured, mine is not easy till I am where you are; therefore send us a coach as soon as you can; it shall find us ready whenever it comes, if God bless us to be well. . . . I guess my lord (her father-in-law, Lord Bedford) will soon be in town; pray present my duty to him. Our girls are very well: we were altogether at the farm-house this day. They are plastering the granary. Pray keep good hours, and take care of (using) hackney-coaches.'

Referring to some one about to start from Stratton for London: 'To see anybody preparing, and taking their way to see what I long to do a thousand times more than they (her husband) makes me not endure to suffer this going without saying something to my dearest life; though it is a kind of anticipating my joy when we shall meet, to allow myself so much before

[1] The sand-box in old writing-cabinets took the place of blotting-paper.

[2] Higler: 'a carrier or huckster who buys up poultry and dairy produce, and supplies in exchange petty commodities from the shops in town.' *New English Dictionary.*

the time. . . . They will tell you how well I get hither, and how well I found our dear treasure here (their son, now in his second year): your boy will please you; you will, I think, find him improved, though I tell you so beforehand. They fancy he wanted you, for, as soon as I alighted, he followed calling Papa; but I suppose it is the word he has most command of; so was not disobliged by the little fellow. The girls were fine (in their dress) in remembrance of the happy 29th of September (Lord Russell's birthday); and we drank your health after a red-deer pie; and at night your girls and I supped on a sack posset: nay, Master (her little son) would have his room (at the table), and for haste burnt his fingers in the posset; but he does but rub his hands for it. It is the most glorious weather here that ever was seen. The coach shall meet you at the cabbage-garden: be there by eight o'clock, or a little after; though I guess you can hardly be there so soon, day breaks so late, and indeed the mornings are so misty, it is not wholesome to be in the air so early. I do propose going to my neighbour Worsley to-day. I would fain be telling my heart more things—anything to be in a kind of talk with him—but, I believe, Spencer stays for my dispatch: he was willing to go early; but this was to be the delight of this morning, and the support of the day. It is performed in bed, thy pillow at my back, where thy dear head shall lie, I hope, to-morrow night, and many more, I trust in His mercy, notwithstanding all our enemies or ill-wishers.'

Here we have the preparations for a journey to London in the end of October 1681. A week later they had not set out:

'The hopes I have, my dearest life, that this will be

the concluding epistle for some time, makes me undertake it with more cheerfulness than my others. We are very busy in preparing, and full of expectation to see a coach come for us: just at twelve this morning I heard one, was not altogether as welcome as Mr. Whithead will be: it proved Lady Worsley (another county neighbour); but Miss (her daughter) who had me by the hand, would not quit it, but led me to her dinner, and told my Lady Worsley I said I would dine with her; then she (Lady W.) would dine there too; and Miss consented she should: so we took your table to my chamber and pleased all parties, I hope, I being so, now it is over. I put her to work as soon as we had eaten. We laid up all your pears: I intend them to go by Monday's carrier. Your hawks we know not what to do with, but stay they must, I say, till we are gone, and horses come back; but your new dog, I hope you will think of, for what to do with him I know not: I have a mind to have him led along with the waggon, for then he will be safe going through towns, and Betty Forster (a maid) may take care of him at nights; but I hope you will tell us your mind to-morrow, if you can think of anything but parliamentary affairs. I pray God direct all your consultations there, and, my dearest dear, you guess my mind. A word to the wise. I never longed more earnestly to be with you . . .'

The guarded way in which, among her rambling domestic gossip, Lady Russell refers to parliamentary affairs, reminds us how unsafe the posts were in those days, and how cautious the leading men and their friends had to be in discussing political matters, for no one knew under what unfriendly eyes letters might eventually come. Lady Russell writes anxiously a few days later that she is 'discouraged as to good news,

you give me not a word of comfort, nor truly I find none in the news-letters, but increase of witnesses against Lord Shaftesbury.' The family were still at Stratton, but her practical mind lets us know that the pears had been dispatched with a note to her husband in the box, telling him that all the south pears were wrapped in papers and linen to distinguish them from the rest. Miss Katharine, we know, helped in the packing of them, and also wrote a little letter to go to her father in London, but 'there has been almost wet eyes about it, she thinks it so ill done.'

One more letter, the last in the collection, was written from Stratton, dated September 16, 1682: 'I waited till I came from church, that I might as late as I could tell you all your concerns here are just as you left them. The young man (her baby son) as mad, winking at me, and striking with his drumstick whatever comes to his reach. If I had written before church, whilst my morning-draught was in my head, this might have entertained you better; but now those fumes are laid, I find my spirits more dull than usual. . . . I know nothing new since you went; but I know, as certainly as I live, that I have been for twelve years as passionate a lover as ever woman was, and hope to be so one twelve years more; happy still and entirely yours.'

An earlier letter gives an account of her ladyship's visit to Tunbridge Wells, where she went to drink the waters:

'After a toilsome day, there is some refreshment to be telling our story to our best friend. I have seen your girl well laid in bed, and ourselves have made our suppers upon biscuits, a bottle of white wine and another of beer, mingled my uncle's way, with nutmeg

and sugar. None are disposed to bed, not so much as complaining of weariness. Beds and things are all very well here: our want is yourself and good weather. But now I have told you our present condition: to say a little of the past—I do really think, if I could have imagined the illness of the journey, it would have discouraged me: it is not to be expressed how bad the way is from Sevenoaks; but our horses did extremely well, and Spencer very diligent, often off his horse to lay hold of the coach.' (We can see the great chariot labouring and rocking through the mud!) 'I have not much more to say this night: I hope the quilt is remembered; and Francis must remember to send more biscuits, either when you come, or soon after. I long to hear from you, my dearest soul, and truly think your absence already an age. I have no mind to my gold plate: here is no table to set it on; but if that does not come, I desire you would bid Betty Forster send the silver glass I use every day. In discretion I haste to bed, longing for Monday, I assure you.'

When positions were reversed, and she was in London, while Lord Russell was in the country for pleasure or business, she wrote him with the same eagerness, 'coasting the town for news,' as she says, so as to keep him informed of all that was going on. It is amusing to read with what frank, honest relish she likes to tell him about what she has been eating:

'I beg thy leave, my only dear, by the way of refreshment, to tell you how I have spent the day:—I ate pudding with the girls, and then went and ate porridge and pudding with my sister; then sent for both misses to make their visit, dispatched them home, so proceeded to the work of the day; made a dozen visits, and concluded at Whitehall. I learnt nothing

there, but that the queen had cried heartily: her eyes made it very visible, yet she was very lively. She was at cards. . . .'

The air was at this time thick with suspicion and lies, and the queen had been accused of being involved in a plot to poison the king. Such references to politics as occur in the letters are for the most part only to be inferred from some incidental allusion like the above. When she gives political news she makes no comment. 'Your tasks are like to be difficult in town and country,' she says: 'I pray God direct your judgment in all your actions.' Once she writes, in evident anxiety, and a little reproachfully: 'My sister being here tells me she overheard you tell her Lord last night that you would take notice of the business (you know what I mean) in the House: this alarms me, and I earnestly beg of you to tell me truly if you have or mean to do it. If you do, I am most assured you will repent it. I beg once more to know the truth. It is more pain to be in doubt, and to your sister too; and if I have any interest I use it to beg your silence in this case, at least to-day.'

Probably this refers to a motion brought forward in the House of Commons by Lord Russell, attacking the policy of the king (Charles II.) and the Duke of York. Though for years William Russell sat in Parliament without taking part in debate, by this time he was recognised as leader of the 'country' and Protestant party; its members were indignant at the extravagance and corruption of the court; they dreaded 'Popery' in the person of the Duke of York, the king's heir. Lord Russell became their mouthpiece, and was disliked and suspected accordingly by the court party. His powerful family connections, and

the uprightness and simplicity of his own character, protected him, until his path was crossed by the darker intrigues of the 'Rye-house Plot.' It was a time when false witnesses swore away many a life, and Lady Russell did well to utter the warnings she did.—'Look to your pockets,' she says, in a postscript to a letter, 'a printed paper says you will have fine papers put into them, and then witnesses to swear.'

Though most of her letters from London are written with a light-hearted enjoyment and interest in the doings of her *monde*, with messages from the children, cheerful references to Woburn rabbits for supper, boiled oysters, larks from Dunstable, and what not—again that undernote of love and sorrow and apprehension makes itself heard. She bade herself think with resolution of separation and death as 'a necessary meditation sometimes that we may not be surprised above our strength by a sudden accident, being unprepared . . . death is the extremest evil against Nature, it is true; let us overcome the immoderate fear of it, either to our friend or self, and then what light hearts we may live with.'

There are curious things in those letters of London news. We hear of the wretched Mrs. Cellier, who stood in the pillory, defending herself as well as she could, with a battledore in her hand, from the stones flung at her: 'all that were thrown within reach, she took up and put in her pocket.' (This has a fierce hint of future vengeance in it.) Another tale: 'Mr. Craford has stole a young woman worth £2000 out of a window. Her mother had employed him to persuade her against a match she was not willing to consent to, and so he did, most effectually.' Sometimes the ladies went shopping to the fashionable 'Dutch woman's' in Paternoster Row, where they bought tea and foreign curios;

or one of the French ladies of the court brought over packages of alluring things from Paris, and wondered extremely at Lady Russell that 'I had not curiosity to see so fine things.' (Oddly enough, there are no references to clothes in those letters we have of hers. Her son afterwards showed more 'curiosity' in such matters.)

One touch of Nature unites the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries; in reporting to her husband the progress of some work at Southampton House, she tells how the painting is unfinished, because the painter's men cannot be got to work!

'From the sharpest trials Good Lord preserve us, if it may be,' she had written, as if a dark thought had crossed her mind. She had spoken of the 'alloys to her pleasure' in reading a certain letter of her husband's, but prudently deferred saying more till they should meet—without doubt referring to political anxieties. As she knew all he was doing, the blow that fell upon her, though it was sudden and terrible, cannot have found her altogether unprepared. The Exclusion Bill (to disqualify James, Duke of York, as a Roman Catholic, from succeeding to the crown) was strongly supported by Lord Russell, and he was prepared to force the king to accept it. With him were Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Essex, Algernon Sidney, and others. Another nobleman, Lord Howard of Escrick, had lately joined their counsels. Afterwards, Lord Russell owned that 'the putting themselves in the power of such a man would be their reproach, as it had been their ruin, in trusting a man of so ill a character.' He betrayed them to the king. Witnesses of doubtful character were ready to prove that they had been concerned in a deeper plot, hatched by the extremists of

the party, aimed at the lives of King Charles and the Duke of York.

Complicity in this Lord Russell absolutely denied, though he refused to admit that the principle of armed resistance to the sovereign was in all cases illegitimate. Perhaps he might have saved his life, if he had given a theoretical assent to this doctrine, urged to it, as he was, by his friends the two clergymen, Dr. Burnet and Dr. Tillotson. It is to his honour that he refused. 'It would be a lie,' he said, finding himself unconvinced by their arguments: 'If I am in error, God will forgive me.'

From the first hour of warning and surmise—when Lord Shaftesbury had fled—when the messenger appeared to lead his prisoner to the Tower, and idled away the hours at the public entrance of Southampton House in a strange unhaste to finish his errand—both Lord Russell and his wife showed how they placed the safety of honour above life itself. When word came of that ominous figure at the gate, a hasty message of consultation was sent to friends. There was time to escape: a back entrance was left (by appearance, purposely) unguarded: should Lord Russell go or stay? It was decided that flight would 'plead guilty,' and he stayed.

The messenger at last entered and arrested him. He was taken for examination, and committed to the Tower on the 26th June. The year was 1683. Perhaps his boldness irritated the king, for Charles showed an extraordinary hardness against the Russells. During the four crowded weeks that followed, when the brave, passionate, strong heart of the woman carried her through such scenes of effort and of anguish, he turned a deaf ear to all her pleadings and the petitions of her

friends, though his son Monmouth was among those, and his own advisers counselled mercy.

On the 13th July, a fortnight after Lord Russell's arrest, came the trial. Judge and jury were prejudiced against the prisoner, but amongst the spectators who crowded the court, must have been many sympathisers. The strangers were so many that the counsel complained of not having room to stand. The accused was not permitted the help of a legal adviser; the witnesses for the prosecution were men of no standing or character. It told hardly against the prisoner that Lord Essex, who had been concerned along with him, had committed suicide in the Tower, so that his evidence and his denials were unsupported.

But he was not left alone among his enemies, for a thrill of grief and sympathy went round the court when it was perceived that Lady Russell was by her husband's side—never, we may believe, with a more willing heart than on that day. Their devotion to each other was well known, and it added a poignancy to the scene. In default of legal assistance, Lord Russell asked the Chief Justice (Sir Francis Pemberton) if he might have pen and ink, and liberty to have notes taken for him as the trial proceeded, to help his memory. The Attorney General, who was prosecuting, hastened to bar out professional aid, by saying that he would be allowed to employ a servant. 'Any of your servants,' the judge added, 'shall assist you in writing anything you please.'

'My wife is here to do it for me,' Lord Russell said. and as Lady Russell rose from her seat and stood beside her husband, the sternest hearts there softened for a moment. 'If my lady will give herself that trouble,' the judge said, bowing gravely in acquiescence; and

so her ears heard and her pen wrote all the lies and twisting of the truth, yet her courage and her self-possession never failed. Her lord was condemned to death. 'If I had not taken his life, he would have taken mine,' King Charles said afterwards. We wonder how this easy-humoured king could have resisted Lady Russell pleading on her knees for her husband's life. She left nothing untried, though the time was short—only one week—after the trial. Through her uncle, the Marquis de Ruvigny, she besought the good offices of the King of France. Louis, it was said, wrote a letter to be delivered by Ruvigny. 'My Lord Russell's head will be off before the Marquis arrives,' Charles said coolly. He told Monmouth that if he pardoned Russell, he must break with the Duke of York. Even the king's favourite, the Duchess of Portsmouth, could not win a pardon from him, for her own enrichment.

In his prison, Lord Russell was preparing himself for that death which from the first he had believed to be inevitable. He had said to his valet, on the day of his arrest, that he knew his enemies would take his life, and, as the days wore on in vain attempts to procure an alteration of his sentence, he became almost impatient of the efforts of his friends. The 'earthly turmoil' was indeed becoming

> 'strange and vain,
> And near and real the charm of that repose'

which had suddenly drawn nigh. He said to Dr. Burnet, who was with him continually that last week, that 'he wished his wife would give over beating every bush and running so about for his preservation; but when he considered that it would be some mitigation

of her sorrow afterwards that she had left nothing undone that could have given any probable hope, he acquiesced, and indeed,' Burnet adds, 'I never saw his heart so near failing as when he spoke of her.'

He expressed his joy in her, and 'what a great blessing she had been to him, and what a misery it would have been if she had not had that magnanimity of spirit joined to her tenderness, as never to have desired him to do a base thing for the saving of his life.' '. . . What a week I should have passed (he said) if she had been still crying on me to turn informer and be a Lord Howard!'

The day of execution was Saturday. A reprieve till the following Monday had been refused. On Friday, Lady Russell brought the children to say farewell to their father. He talked of their future, kissed and blessed them with composure, and bade them farewell. 'Stay and sup with me,' he said to his wife, 'let us eat our last earthly food together.' After this sacramental meal, they parted. 'At eleven o'clock on Friday evening my lady left him; he kissed her four or five times, and she kept her sorrow so within herself that she gave him no disturbance at their parting.

'After she was gone (he said) now the bitterness of death was passed.' Late into the night he continued to talk of her, of her great qualities of mind and heart, and of how her behaviour 'in this extremity was beyond all.' He told Dr. Burnet that he did not know 'those transports which some good people felt,' but he had 'a full calm in mind'; and in this fearless, tranquil mood, he met the day of his death, saying, as he wound his watch for the last time, 'I am done with Time now, and am going into Eternity.' He spoke of the

strange sensations of the blind, to whom sight has been given, and, thinking of that which lay before him, said, 'But what if the first thing they saw were the rising sun?'

He was executed on July 21st at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and his body was taken to Chenies, and laid in the burial-place there of his ancestors.

'Great persons have great trials, and have better opportunities to fit their minds to encounter them. Now, madam, summon up all your strength and acquit yourself as becomes you in this utmost assault; and I pray God assist you.' Thus one wrote to Lady Russell, and she did not disappoint her friends. She had left London early in August, and gone with her children to Woburn, the home of Lord Bedford, her father-in-law. 'Amazed with grief' as she was, she was roused by the need of defending her husband's memory. His scaffold declaration, not spoken but handed to the sheriff, and circulated among the people afterwards, had made a deep impression. The court party, in displeasure and alarm, asserted that the paper had not been written by Lord Russell, and did not represent his true opinions. She wrote the king a fearless, dignified letter, avowing the truth of 'all that is set down, praying his Majesty charitably to believe that he who in all his life was observed to act with the greatest clearness and sincerity, would not at the point of death do so disingenuous and false a thing as to deliver for his own what was not properly and expressly so.' She ends by saying that if she has written anything displeasing to his Majesty, he will pardon 'the daughter of a person who served your Majesty's father in his greatest extremities (and your Majesty in your

greatest posts), and one that is not conscious of ever having done anything to offend you.'

Amid all her sorrow, Lady Russell is splendidly magnanimous. Not once, in all the sad outpourings of her heart in her long letters to friends, is there a single revengeful word. Neither is there outcry and clamour, such as many a lesser woman would have given vent to. She herself said long afterwards, 'there was something so glorious in the object of my greatest sorrow, I believe *that*, in some degree, kept me from being overwhelmed.' But the cry of the heart breaks forth: 'I cannot be comforted. . . . I want him to talk with, to walk with, to eat and sleep with. All these things are irksome to me. The day unwelcome, and the night so, too.'

Her children's need of her, the respect and sympathy of her friends, above all, her unwavering hope in immortality and in God, carried her through the years that followed. She wrote long letters to her father's old friend and her own, Dr. Fitzwilliam, Rector of Cottenham, relieving herself by pouring out her moods and sorrows to him. At first, she says, even the sight of her children 'made her heart shrink,' remembering the pleasure her lord had taken in them. Sometimes, too, she could not refrain from thinking 'if greater persuasions had been used . . . or some errors at the trial amended, or other applications made, he might have been acquitted, and so yet in the land of the living.' But she adds, 'I believe I do ill to torment myself with such unprofitable thoughts.'

Another correspondent at this time was Mr. Hoskins, a friend, whose training as a lawyer made him very useful to her, burdened as she now was with the care of great houses and estates. It was he who said of Lord

Russell that he was one 'for whom, of all men I have known, one would have been the most willing to have died.' He proved himself a wise and good friend, for he encouraged Lady Russell to distract herself from her grief by taking personal oversight, as far as she could, of her household and business affairs. The details of daily life, troublesome and petty as they must have seemed to her now, needed discreet and delicate handling. There was a confidential servant to be discharged, —Watkins, who used to ride with her letters. His fidelity was doubted: Mr. Hoskins gives her excellent advice about avoiding 'an angry parting.'

She resolved, too, to take up herself the education of her children. Her friend Dr. Burnet wrote: 'As it is the greatest part of your duty, it will be a noble entertainment to you, and the best diversion and cure of your wounded spirits.' She accepted all these duties with patient courage, but years passed without much lessening her sorrow. It wasted her body, and lay heavy upon her mind, so that to see her made one melancholy, we are told. She lived in retirement, having no visitors except relatives, and people on necessary business. Three days, she tells us, she kept in special remembrance—the day her husband was arrested, the day of his trial, and the day of his execution. On those sad anniversaries, she saw no one but her children, though, as she says, 'I do not affect to be singular'; and when years passed on, and friends came to see her on these days, she tried to receive them with her usual composure. She did not wish to sadden her children. She hopes the elder ones will remember what they have lost, 'but I would cherish a cheerful temper in them with all the industry I can, for sure we please our Maker best when we take all

His providences with a cheerful spirit.' But years had gone by before she could write thus.

She looks forward with apprehension and longing to seeing Stratton again, that place where she had lived in 'sweet and full content,' and thought none deserved her envy! 'But I must pass no more such days on earth; however, places are indeed nothing. Where can I live that his figure is not present to me? Nor would I have it otherwise.'

She went to Chenies to visit her husband's grave. Her friends were unwilling that she should go—Lord Bedford, her father-in-law, 'was afflicted at the thought'—but she persisted. 'I had some business there, for that to me precious and delicious friend desired I would make a little monument for us, and I had never seen the place; had set a day to do it with him not three months before he was carried thither, but prevented by the boy's illness.'

'Doctor,' she pleads to her friend Dr. Fitzwilliam, who had wisely bidden her turn her thoughts otherwheres—'I had considered, I went not to seek the living among the dead; I knew I should not see him any more, wherever I went.' She had covenanted with herself not to break out into idle mourning, but to think of the 'country afar off, whither the nobler part has fled, where no earthly power has any sway, nor can put an end to a happy society; there I would willingly be, but we must not limit our time: I hope to wait without impatiency.'

Without impatiency, in love, and faith, and duty to children and to friends, she waited forty years till the desired end came.

They were years that saw good and evil. First the illness of her baby son (three years old when his

father died) roused her to realise that she had still something to lose. She had the happiness of seeing her three children grow up, and of keeping entire their affection and their confidence, while she exercised a very complete control over their affairs. What touched her most acutely, outside the family circle, were the great changes in the state. Special marks of sympathy and esteem had been sent her from the court of Holland; Mr. Dykvelt the ambassador visited her in his official capacity to convey to her the condolences of his prince, and several letters passed between her and the Princess of Orange.

The year of the Revolution, 1688, saw her drawn again into the busy world on account of her children's affairs. 'I believe to assist my yet helpless children is my business; which makes me take many dinners abroad, and do of that nature many things, the nature of which is hard enough for a heavy and weary mind; but yet I bless God I do it.' In June her eldest daughter was married to Lord Cavendish, son of the Earl of Devonshire. The bride and bridegroom were very young, but it gave much quiet satisfaction to Lady Russell to see this marriage accomplished. She had had much pains with lawyers over the settlements. 'I have a well-bred lord to deal with,' she says, 'yet inflexible if the point is not to his advantage.' The only letter she finds time to write on the day after the marriage is to her old friend Dr. Fitzwilliam, telling him of the event, and lingering for a moment over the memories of the month: she is interrupted by a visit from Lord Devonshire with his wedding-gift, a pair of diamond pendants.

Then come the uneasy months when the Government of England is once more in the melting-pot.

King James appeals (strange that he *could*) to the Earl of Bedford for his support. 'I *had* a son,' the old man replies, 'who might have been a support to your Majesty.' Then King James goes, and the Prince and Princess of Orange come, and are proclaimed king and queen with 'a world of bonfires, and candles almost in every house.' The little bride, Lady Cavendish (she was only fourteen), wrote an account of it all to a friend. 'I was at the sight, and you may imagine very much pleased to see (the prince and princess) proclaimed King and Queen of England in the room of King James, my father's murderer. There was wonderful acclamations of joy, which, though they were very pleasing to me, yet they frightened me too.'

Lady Russell welcomed the change with thoughts 'too crowded to get a passage to express what she felt.' Nothing could give back her lost happiness, but she had the satisfaction of seeing her husband's opinions justified, and his memory honoured. One of the first acts of the new Government was to reverse the sentence of attainder on Lord Russell, and his father and the Earl of Devonshire were both honoured with the title of duke. Lady Russell was now in the full sunshine of court favour; she was consulted by great personages, and people looked to her for patronage and help in forwarding their suits. She must often have been embarrassed by this, for she says herself, in one case she is pressing, 'I undertake very few things, and therefore do very little good to people; but *I do not love to be baulked*, when I thought my end compassed.'

She married her second daughter, Katharine, to Lord Roos, son of the Earl of Rutland. Her old friend, Sir James Forbes, wrote her an account of the young people's homecoming at Belvoir. She never

ceased to watch over her children's health. There are letters to Katharine full of advice. 'I hope you tell me true that your cold was a little one; pray never deceive me, for it serves no good end at all, unless you think it does so, to let alone a medicine that I might enjoin you to take. . . . Pray do not whisk it a-horseback till it pleases God you have overcome your rheums.'

She was gratified by a proposal from very highly placed persons that her son (Lord Tavistock, as he was now called) should represent Middlesex in Parliament. But, because of his extreme youth—he was only a boy in his teens—she wisely refused her sanction, and sent him to Oxford instead, and afterwards abroad with a tutor. The only anxiety she seems to have had over her children's character came now, for the boy loved fine things, such as rich laced suits and cravats of point-lace, and bought extravagantly. He could not resist the curios that tempted him abroad—music, rare books, and prints—and, worse still, he had heavy losses at play, the amount of which he concealed from his tutor. But he confessed all to his mother, and her letter to his grandfather, the old Duke of Bedford, is full of tact and of sympathy both with the old man and the young one: it shows, besides, as she explains how the money is to be raised, how thoroughly she knew her affairs. When the time came, as it soon did, for Lord Tavistock to succeed his grandfather, he and his young wife lived quietly at Woburn, where he busied himself with planting trees and improving his estate. His mother's friend, Lord Orford, thought him perhaps too anxious to save money and pay off his debts.

Lady Russell saw grandchildren growing up round

her, and this doubtless helped her to face the double sorrow she had yet to bear. Smallpox, the terror of every household, rich and poor alike, seized her son. His wife and children were sent away from him, but his mother remained, and he died, comforted by her love and prayers. The same year (1711) her daughter Katharine, Duchess of Rutland, died, the mother of nine children; and Lady Russell, after she saw her laid in her coffin, went to the sick-bed of her eldest daughter Rachel (Duchess of Devonshire), who happily lived to wait, twelve years afterwards, upon the last moments of that much loved, much tried, mother.

Lady Russell died, an old woman of eighty-six, perhaps less eager then to be gone than forty years before, when at Chenies she had looked on the place where he lay—that 'precious and delicious friend'—and had longed to lie down there too. For she says herself that though death is a 'refreshing' thought to her, 'yet there is a love of living implanted in our natures, and how wel is it that it is so, to helpe us to endure the crosses and the toyles and labours of life.'

She had schooled herself too, for in a very interesting letter to her children, she tells them her method—of how she 'carries about her a little piece of paper' on which she wrote down a confession of faults she had been surprised into, and this from week to week she scrutinised in strict self-examination and watchfulness, especially before she went to Communion. In another paper, written by her own hand, in extreme age, she accuses herself of frivolity in youth, and in later years of being 'proud, not enduring slights or neglects, and apt to be soon angry.' Hers was a resolute nature, and she may have had the defects of her qualities, but the fact that she confessed such faults to herself, goes

far to prove that she did not yield to them. To one of her daughters she said, 'at your years, I can say (without vanity) what pleased me I enjoyed, what crossed me had not power to torment me long. . . . I have felt many days of bitter grief, as well as others of lesser trouble and provocation, and many of great and true happiness, which was made up by love and quiet at home, abroad, friendships and innocent diversions; and yet, believe me, child, life is a continual labour chequered with care and pleasure . . . heaviness may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. It grows dark. . . .'

It grew dark with her too, for her eyesight was threatened. People said she had wept herself blind, but the cause of trouble was a cataract, which was removed. In extreme old age, she still read and wrote letters to her friends, though, as she said, 'her glass was running low.' The 'sweet saint who sat by Russell's side' was now perhaps a little forgotten by a new generation, for whom the sharp outlines of her story had been dimmed by the passage of time. In her last letter (some time before her death) she says, 'evening is creeping upon me,' and then she makes a little joke about the grandchild who has come to share her dinner and her company. It is a tranquil picture of the evening of her life—she, who had been 'as passionate a lover as ever woman was' sits there in the deepening shadows of age and infirmity, and behind are the long years, full of experience and of hope—the time that she has 'waited, without impatiency.'

# LADY GRISELL BAILLIE

'O WERENA my heart licht I wad dee,' she sang,—this daughter of the Scottish Kirk and Covenant in that ballad-lilt of hers, which has come down to us, gay and sad both, like so many of the songs of her country. The zest for life that lasted through eighty years, bad and good, was never daunted by the gruesome accidents of the times, for she had learned as a child the meaning of prison and the fear of death, yet went on her way mirthful and unafraid. Her father was Sir Patrick Hume, eighth Baron of Polwarth in Berwickshire, place and family both ancient in Scottish border history.

> 'At Polwart on the Green
> Our forbears oft were seen
> To dance about the Thorn.'

He married in the year 1660, before he was twenty, Grisell Ker, daughter of Sir Thomas Ker of Cavers; they had a large family of children, seventeen or eighteen (the family histories differ), of whom several died in infancy; nine grew to be men and women. Grisell was the second eldest of those who survived; she came next to Patrick, always a dearly loved and favourite brother. In the old castle of Redbraes the children were born, and many a game they must have played on the green slopes there that lie so pleasantly to the sun, and round about the old beech-trees. Doubtless they went to church at Polwarth, where their father's old tutor, Master George Holliwell, son of the

wigmaker at Duns, was minister. Beneath the church was the family burial-place, and into this vault, lit by a small grating in the wall above ground, they would peer sometimes with fearful curiosity. Many a story of ghost and bogle they must have heard, for the religious ferment then in men's minds only gave a new turn to those tales. Portents affrighted the country-folk in the 'Killing Times'; showers of blood fell from the sky, and we are gravely told of the 'little ghost and spectre' that appeared at Rosencath, 'one of my Lord Argile's houses' (garrisoned for the Government by the Earl of Athole), 'where it beats the sojers sometimes, and bids them make good use of their tyme, for it shall not be long.'

Sir Patrick Hume was a stout friend to the Covenanters, not merely as a matter of politics, but from deep religious feeling. As one of his descendants has written: 'The mainspring of his actions is to be found in his unalterable belief that the Protestant faith, and especially that form of it held by the Presbyterian Church, was the only true one; and for this belief he cheerfully sacrificed both home and fortune.'[1]

He represented the Merse country in the Scottish Parliament, and soon made himself known and disagreeable to the Government by his opposition to the Duke of Lauderdale's tyranny. In 1674, he went with others to London to lay the complaints of his party before the king. The action of the Privy Council in garrisoning gentlemen's houses in the country, and making a levy to supply the soldiers with necessaries ('meal, pots and pans, and candle') was another much-resented grievance. Sir Patrick, who all his life was said to be a 'lover of set speeches,' harassed the

[1] *Marchmont and the Humes of Polwarth.*

authorities so much with his opinions, that he was declared 'a factious person' causing confusion in the realm, and 'incapable of public trust.' Such a judgment would have troubled him little, but it was followed by imprisonment.

His daughter Grisell was now a child of eleven or twelve, and was well acquainted with what was going on. This battle for 'Civil and Ecclesiastical Liberty' was not a remote affair of high politics. It touched the everyday interests, the most sacred beliefs and prejudices of the common people, and this gave life and fierceness to the struggle. Not only at the laird's table in the ha' (Sir Patrick very skilful in laying down the law of it all), but among the serving men and women, the farm-folk and the shepherds, people talked of the arbitrary doings of My Lord Lauderdale and the council, the dragoonings and imprisonments, the hangings in the Grassmarket, and the hideous scenes in the council-chamber when prisoners were put to the question with boot and thumbkins. A child who grew up facing such realities, ripened early; and to keep, as she did, a heart brave, steadfast, and merry, was indeed wonderful. Her first adventure came when her father's old friend and neighbour, Mr. Robert Baillie of Jerviswood, was in prison in the Tolbooth at Edinburgh. His friends were anxious to communicate with him, but no treasonable visitors were admitted. Grisell Hume, as her daughter afterwards tells, was sent on this errand from Redbraes to Edinburgh, the journey itself being then formidable for a child. We are not told how she got into the Tolbooth—Joanna Baillie, the Scottish poetess, pictures her playing round the gate, slipping in at change of sentry, and creeping up the stair behind the turnkey—but more likely she was

admitted frankly as an honest country child, too young to talk treason to the prisoner. At any rate she succeeded, and acted her part so well, that from that time she was completely in the confidence of her parents, and helped in all the devices which were necessary for the protection of her father and his friends. Her fate was to be still more closely linked with the Baillies of Jerviswood, for here, in the Tolbooth prison, it is said she first met the grave-eyed boy who was one day to be her husband.

Sir Patrick was imprisoned again, in Dumbarton Castle, and afterwards in Stirling. On his release in 1679 through the intervention of English friends, he joined with other Scottish gentlemen who proposed to escape from tyranny at home by founding a colony beyond seas in the American province of Carolina. They had taken the necessary legal steps, but on the discovery of the Rye-house Plot in England, the king's permission was withdrawn. Sir Patrick was a kinsman of Lord Russell,[1] and when they met in London, the Laird of Polwarth had joined in the conferences of the English 'country' party. But he disclaimed, as Lord Russell did, any share in a project against the king's life. Suspicion fell upon many. Robert Baillie of Jerviswood was again imprisoned, and parties were sent out to apprehend Sir Patrick Hume. Soldiers appeared at Redbraes in search of its master, to the terror and indignation of the servants, who thanked God that the laird was far away, for so they believed him to be. Not one of them knew the truth, except faithful Jamie Winter, the house-carpenter, to whom the Lady of Polwarth had confided

[1] The Earl of Somerset, grandfather of Lord Russell, and Julian Kerr, Sir Patrick Hume's grandmother, were brother and sister.

the secret which she and her daughter Grisell alone knew. A mile away, in the darksome, eerie vault below Polwarth Church, Sir Patrick was in hiding. With the man's help, a bed and bed-clothes were carried to the vault under cover of night, and in this grim place the fugitive spent a month, relieving the slow hours by repeating to himself Buchanan's Latin version of the Psalms, the whole of which he knew by heart. There was no light to read by. To supply him regularly with food was a difficulty, for his wife and daughter feared to do anything that would rouse the curiosity of the other children or the servants. A chance word might give an enemy a clue, and if the soldiers who policed the country appeared, their methods of extorting evidence were none of the gentlest. Grisell, who was now a girl of eighteen, used to collect food quietly at family meal-times; then late at night, when all the house slept, she undid the bolts and stole out, and, with her basket hidden under her cloak, sped across the silent dewy fields in fearful haste, stumbling among the gravestones in the churchyard, breathless and anxious till she heard her father's whisper that all was well. The terror of the hour, 'when the bodiless ging aboot,' was a very real thing, and she was still more alarmed when the minister's dogs at the manse close by broke out into furious barking. Once beside her father, her good spirits overcame her fears. She amused him with her accounts of all the home doings, and Sir Patrick chuckled over the ruses she had resorted to in securing his food. He liked sheep's head; and one day while the children were at their dinner, she had conveyed most of one into her lap; 'when her brother Sandy, afterwards Lord Marchmont, had done, he looked up in astonish-

ment and said, "Mother, will ye look at Grisell! while we have been eating our broth, she has eat up the whole sheep's head."' Most of the night Grisell spent thus in her father's company, and her daughter, Lady Murray, says, 'Often did they laugh heartily in that doleful habitation, at different accidents that happened.' It was a great relief to her when the minister's dogs were got rid of. Lady Polwarth sent for him, and so wrought upon his feelings with a story of a mad dog at large in the country, that he destroyed them all. In his hiding-place Sir Patrick often heard his own name mentioned by the worthy country-folk as they gathered to church on Sunday, and many a fervent wish for his safety was uttered. He must have had some strange thoughts as he sat there in that place of the dead, seeing only, when he looked up through the grating, the long green churchyard grass waving in the wind. But he was a true Scotsman, and took it all philosophically. When, in the dim light, he saw a skull moving gently on the shelf where it lay, he 'wondered at the power of imagination, went near it and took it up, when a mouse jumped out of it, which had occasioned the motion.' The bedstead which served the Laird of Polwarth in the vault is still preserved at Marchmont, a folding frame of black walnut. (The shape is one which, copied in humbler woods, was much used in Scottish farm-houses and cottages.) Another very interesting relic of this story is the lantern which Grisell carried on these night expeditions. It may be seen in the Antiquarian Museum at Edinburgh. It has a three-cornered wooden frame, with a stout handle projecting behind, also of wood, worn smooth by the grasp of many hands: the hinged frame has a little button and 'snib' of bone,

and inside there is a metal socket for the home-made tallow candle which would supply the light.

A month had dragged itself away. Mother and daughter were planning a place of concealment in Redbraes Castle itself. There was a room in the basement, where a specially contrived bed could be drawn out over the floor. Grisell and Jamie Winter again did all the work. They lifted the boards under the bed, and dug a hole beneath, scraping up the earth with their hands, 'not to make any noise, till she left not a nail upon her fingers; she helping the man to carry the earth as they dug it, in a sheet on his back, out at the window into the garden.' All was done at night, in haste and silence. One cannot but think that, with all her anxiety for her father, Grisell, being the gay resourceful creature that she was, enjoyed the 'ploy' of it, the mystery of her comings and goings, the secrecy from others. The hole was finished and measured, and Jamie Winter in his workshop at home made a box to fit into it, large enough for a man to lie in; this was supplied with bedding, and air-holes were made in the boards above. It was meant to be a safe retreat in case of the house being searched, and when it was finished Grisell thought herself 'the most secure happy creature alive.' But alas! after a short time of trial, it was found that water gathered in the hole, so that the bed was actually floating. She was stunned with disappointment. At the same moment news came by the carrier from Edinburgh that Mr. Robert Baillie had died on the scaffold the day before, and that 'everybody was sorry, though they durst not show it.' Doubtless his friends were spared none of the shocking details of his death, and they heard how his sister stood by, snatching from the executioner the relics

that were so precious to her and treasuring them in her apron. So we are told in stories of the time. His son George, whom Grisell had met six years before, had come home from his law studies in Holland to see his father die. Little wonder that the boy grew to manhood, grave and silent, sombre almost, in contrast to the high-spirited Humes, his friends.

It was plain that there was no safety for Sir Patrick at home, and Grisell worked busily altering his clothes to make a suitable disguise. When all was ready, John Allan, the grieve, was sent for, and told what he had to do. Lady Murray says the man fainted when he learned that his master was in the house. The other servants were told that John Allan had to start immediately for Morpeth Fair, to sell horses. In the dark of early morning, the master of Redbraes slipped out of the house by a window, reached the stables where the horses were ready saddled, and the two rode away together, followed by many an anxious thought in the heart of Grisell and of her mother. Danger was not far off, for a party of troopers were then on their way to search the house, which they did in their usual thorough way, plunging their swords into Lady Polwarth's plump feather-beds, in case the fugitive should be concealed in one of them. They seem to have learned that some one had left the place with horses, and they went off in pursuit. Meanwhile Sir Patrick, with Allan riding well in front, missed his way in the dark, and found himself alone. After some difficulty, he got across Tweed, and found his servant again, who greeted his master with joy and relief, for he had been overtaken by the troop of horse, who had seized him and questioned him narrowly, but 'he was too cunning for them.' Sir Patrick's disappearance

saved the situation. Two days afterwards James Allan came back to Redbraes with news that his master was safely out of Scotland. He got to London through by-ways, thence to France; from Bordeaux he went on foot to Holland. At Utrecht he presented himself to the Prince of Orange, and here he lived for more than three years, under the name of Dr. Wallace, a Scottish surgeon. In some part of his journey he assumed the character of a pedlar; he is said to have visited his relatives at Castle Hume in Ireland in that guise: he amused himself by leading them on to talk about Sir Patrick Hume, and gave them gossip about himself. He was so gratified at the concern which one of the ladies showed at Sir Patrick's unhappy situation, that he presented her with several pounds of Scotch snuff. Like Alan Breck he must have taken pleasure in the art of the thing.

He had escaped the clutches of the Duke of York and the Privy Council, but his estates were forfeited: Lady Polwarth (so the laird's wife was entitled) journeyed to London by sea, accompanied by the indefatigable Grisell, to make her suit to the authorities for the payment of her jointure from her husband's estate. It was granted her, as if he were already dead, and this annual payment of £150 was all she and her family of nine children had now to live on. This concession was not gained without long waiting and pleading, though the two Scottish ladies were assisted by many good friends. Lord Russell's family is specially mentioned. It is interesting to think of a meeting between Rachel Russell and the Polwarth ladies.

They returned to Scotland, and then the whole family, except Julian, who was too ill to be moved, crossed to Holland, to share Sir Patrick's exile.

Grisell bravely returned alone to bring over her sister, and also 'to negotiate business, and try if she could pick up any money of some that was owing to her father.' She was the staff they all leaned on, and what she undertook was done as a cheerful matter of course, true to the Scottish ideal of absolute devotion to the common interests and well-being of the family. Her forethought made every possible provision for the comfort of her young invalid sister, but they had a terrible voyage from Leith to Holland. The small cabin was crowded; the passengers quarrelled over who should occupy the only bed, for which each of them had already bargained and paid. Grisell kept out of the squabble; she and her sister lay down on the floor, with a bag of their father's books for their pillow. In came the barbarian of a captain, who first, 'with a gluttony incredible,' ate up all their provisions, and then took possession of the bed for himself. A violent storm came on, and this delivered them from his presence, as he was needed on deck. They landed at the Brill at night, in darkness and rain, and set out to walk to Rotterdam. Julian, weak and exhausted with her journey, lost her shoes in the mud, and Grisell carried her the rest of the way on her back. They were helped by a friendly fellow-passenger, a gentleman, who walked with them and carried their modest luggage. He was a refugee like themselves. At Rotterdam they were met by their eldest brother Patrick, and his friend, the faithful George Baillie—the boy who had engaged his heart to Grisell when they first met in the Tolbooth prison; the two escorted the girls to Utrecht, where the Humes were settled.

Here the family spent three years. Afterwards, Lady Grisell never tired of telling her children and grand-

children stories of this time, always saying they were the happiest days of her life, 'though not without their little distresses, but they were rather jokes than grievances.' Their house-rent was their greatest extravagance, for it swallowed up a fourth part of their income. Learned and literary men, besides the numerous Scottish and English exiles, were constant visitors, and no hospitality could seem meagre that was presented with the goodwill and gaiety that shone through all the sayings and doings of Sir Patrick's household. When she looked back on it afterwards, Lady Grisell often declared she thought their housekeeping 'a miracle (they were a family of twelve, counting father and mother, and they seldom sat down to dinner without four or five guests): yet they had no want, but plenty of everything they desired and much contentment.' Grisell did most of the housework, with the help of one little servant-girl. She got up every morning before six o'clock—yet lying in bed was 'a temptation' to her, all her life, she said. She lit her father's study fire, and brought him his morning draught of warm ale with bitters in it (a favourite 'receipt' which was carefully handed down in the family). Then she got the younger children ready, and brought them to their father for their day's lessons: they learned 'everything that was fit for their age'—Latin, French, Dutch, Geography, etc. Side by side with these innocent studies, Sir Patrick worked at his own schemes. Family gossip said afterwards that the whole plan of the Revolution was found 'wrote upon one of the children's slates.' Lady Polwarth taught them her part, and while the girls sat round her working at their embroidery-samplers, Christian, the second daughter, who excelled in music, would sing and play

on the harpsichord 'to divert the others.' They all loved music, as did George Baillie, who spent so much of his time with them; and out of their narrow income, they had contrived to buy this instrument. Sir Patrick, in the first days of his banishment, learned to play the flute, and wrote that he was 'pretty good at it.' Grisell sang, too, and wrote songs in snatches, but she had little time for these diversions, for she was often up all night in her eagerness to overtake the work of that large household. She had the care of the linen—a fine art in those days—and there was cooking and marketing to be done, as well as making and mending for the younger children. She even went to the mill to see the corn ground into meal. Her Scottish pride made her take pains that her brother Patrick should always appear as well dressed as other gentlemen's sons; his cravat and ruffles of point-lace were her special care. George Baillie and he served as privates in the Prince of Orange's Guards 'till they were better provided for.' The young soldiers could amuse themselves by the way, for when they were placed on sentry duty at the palace gates, they used to cross their weapons in front of pretty girls passing in, and demand a kiss from them as toll. When these young people were grey old men and women at home in Scotland, they loved to tell over again the tales of those youthful days, when they were (like enough) often hungry, but always merry. They liked to remind Andrew, Lord Kimmerghame, that eminent legal person, of the day he was sent to draw beer for the entertainment of some passing guest. The boy came running up with the jug of *allerbest*. 'Andrew, what is that in your hand?' Sir Patrick said. It was the spigot of the barrel, and though Andrew dashed down to the cellar at top

speed, the beer had all run out before he got there: 'this occasioned much mirth, though perhaps they did not well know where to get more.' They loved dancing, a taste they inherited from their father, Covenanter though he was. He used to say, 'none had so good reason to be merry and pleased as those that served God and obeyed His commandments.'

One time of serious anxiety they must have had, in 1685, when their father had sailed with the Earl of Argyll on his ill-fated journey to the west of Scotland. The rising he attempted came to nothing: Argyll himself was taken prisoner,—'Defeated, but not ashamed,' as he said with spirit. He paid for it with his life, and Sir Patrick, wandering and hiding, had many a narrow escape until he got out of Scotland, and eventually was able to rejoin his family at Utrecht. Historians blame him as being partly responsible for the failure of the expedition, and describe him as argumentative and interfering (qualities which seem essential to the character of a Scottish laird), but we have only to do with him as he appeared to his family—and they were devoted to him. He was pious, well-learned, and good-humoured—cheerful to a point that withstood the hardest tests. The days of exile and poverty were, however, soon to be over—and *how* poor they were, may be guessed from the story Lady Grisell used to tell how, when the public alms were collected from door to door, the Hume family had not so much as a single penny to give—nothing 'but an orkey, which is a doit, the smallest of all coin: everybody was so ashamed, no one would go to give it, it was so little, and put it from one to t'other: at last my grandfather (Sir Patrick) said: "Well then, I 'll go with it; we can do no more than give all we have."'

Their small remittances from home were often overdue, and they had to pawn such valuables and pieces of silver plate as they possessed; yet when they returned to Scotland they had redeemed everything, and they left Holland free of debt.

This happy issue of their troubles came at the English Revolution in 1688, when the Prince and Princess of Orange were called to the British throne. Sir Patrick and his eldest son went with the prince. After their ships sailed, a great storm came on; Lady Hume, Grisell and Christian went to Helvetsluys to get what news they could. The place was crowded with others on the same errand, and the three ladies had to sleep in the boat which had brought them from Utrecht. They spent three wretched days there, while drowned horses and jettisoned supplies floated in, telling their tale of distress. The prince had to put back, but in due course, news came to the Humes of the safety of their father and brother.

Their joy in the success which followed the landing of William of Orange was darkened by Christian's death—the sister who 'played and sung so well, and had a great deal of life and humour, but no turn to business.' She 'died of a sore throat'—a sudden and short illness probably, and Grisell's sorrow now was such that the great change in the fortunes of the family was 'no more to her than any occurrence she had not the least concern in.' Misfortune could only touch her through her affections, for 'she had tried many hardships without being depressed by them: on the contrary her spirits and activity increased the more . . . but the death of her friends was always a load too heavy for her.' Christian's little harpsichord was carefully brought over to Scotland, and a younger generation treasured it as a memorial of her.

Lady Hume and Grisell crossed in the train of the Princess of Orange, who offered Grisell a post at court as one of her maids of honour. The description of her appearance is very attractive. She was now twenty-three, and glowing with life and health; her physical vigour must have been great, to carry the labours she did so lightly. She was not tall, but handsome and well made, quick and graceful in her movements, with delicate features, 'a life and sweetness in her eyes very uncommon.' Her hair was chestnut, her complexion clear and fine; 'red cheeks, red lips,' like a girl of fifteen, her daughter says she had, and concludes that this charming freshness is due to her mother's plainness of diet; porridge and milk she liked better than anything else.

She did not accept the court appointment, and went gladly home to Scotland with the rest of her family. We are not surprised: in the background was George Baillie, a lover all these years, of the silent, unchanging kind, reserved and devoted. Neither of the young people had a shilling, so nothing was said openly of an engagement, but the parents must have suspected it. Young Baillie had always been a favourite with them; he had shared their family life in Holland; they had constantly trusted him as their daughter's escort when she had to go about on business. Yet they were inclined to be displeased when, without giving any reason, she refused to listen to either of two worthy gentlemen of fortune and character whose proposals they had sanctioned. She looked forward hopefully to an improvement in her lover's fortunes, and she was resolved to marry him, or not at all. When the estates forfeited by Robert Baillie of Jerviswood were restored to his son, the way was plain for the faithful lovers,

and they were married in 1690, two years after the Revolution. Their home was at Mellerstain, not far from the parental dwelling at Redbraes, for Grisell continued no less devoted a daughter now that she was a happy wife. George Baillie and she lived together for forty-eight years, 'in all which time (says their daughter, Lady Murray) I have heard my mother declare, that they never had the shadow of a quarrel, or misunderstanding, or dryness betwixt them, not for a moment.' As long as she and her husband lived, they had no more devoted friends than those honest gentlemen — her rejected suitors. One of them was a cousin, Ker of Cavers. They often told her she had made the best choice in marrying the man she did. She seemed all her life to create round her an atmosphere of frank and loyal affection.

Prosperity shone upon the Hume family. King William had restored to them their lands and houses, and other honours followed. In 1690, the year of Grisell's marriage, Sir Patrick was made a member of the Privy Council and a peer of Scotland, with the title of Lord Polwarth. The *crowned orange* now appears in the coat of arms of the Polwarth family 'as a lasting mark of his Majesty's royal favour.' A diamond ring presented by King William is still preserved as a family heirloom; and there were other gifts from Queen Mary to Lady Polwarth. Various important offices were conferred on Lord Polwarth, until, in 1696, he became Chancellor of Scotland; the following year he was created Earl of Marchmont by the king, and afterwards was appointed High Commissioner, first to the Scottish Parliament, and afterwards to the Church of Scotland, the highest offices the king had to bestow.

The evenness of temper and pleasant humour that

adversity could not sour, remained unspoiled by prosperity. Friends and relations have written down their admiring reflections on Lady Marchmont's kindness and goodness, and simplicity of life, while the Chancellor—when he was not engaged in affairs of state—busied himself with the private matters of his innumerable female cousins, arranging marriages for them and settling their money difficulties. He did not fail in his duty as head of the family. When he became Commissioner, he lived part of the year in Edinburgh, and Lady Marchmont and he spent money freely in furnishing their apartments at Holyrood and in entertaining there. From the menus which have been preserved, the eating must have been on a vast scale. For instance, 'Rost wyld foull 16, Rost Rabets 6, Lobesters 6, Rost old buck and 6 young,' are four items out of a list of fifty for a single dinner.

The diary of a relative, Mr. George Home, gives an admiring account of some of the glories of Holyrood. 'The hangings of the drawing-room have silver in them, and chairs of crimson damask. The bed of state is very fine, the curtains of damask blue and white and lined with green satin and orange fringes. I never thought blue and green suited well near each other before.' He tells also of the coach, 'which is very fine and very high; but they say the painting was spoilt in the ship, but it is done up again, tho' not so well. My Lady has also a very fine chair Japand.' [1]

Lord Marchmont probably took great pleasure in the balls and dances which his children enjoyed so much. His granddaughter, Lady Anne Purves, has left many racy tales of those gay doings of old Edinburgh, long dead,—of the courting and jilting and

[1] From *Marchmont and the Humes of Polwarth.*

match-making that went on. All Lord Marchmont's family married, except Robert, who died in 1692. Two young Irish cousins, Elizabeth and Mary Hume of Castle Hume, had come to live with the Chancellor's family. Patrick (now Lord Polwarth) married Elizabeth; she was fair and good, and dearly loved by the whole family: her early death (in 1701) was the first serious grief of those sunshiny days.

Meanwhile at Mellerstain, under its far-seen hill, which rises shaggy with wood against the blue uplands of Lauderdale, Lady Grisell and her husband lived a busy, happy, peaceful life. She had three children—one, her only son, died young. Her two daughters—Grisell, afterwards Lady Murray, and Rachel, who married Lord Binning, son of the Earl of Haddington—grew up devoted to their mother, who had been from their babyhood their most charming companion. 'I was never in my life from her above two months at a time, and that very seldom, and always unwillingly: she having, from our infancy, treated my sister and me like friends, as well as children, and with an indulgence that we never had a wish to make she could prevent; always used us with an openness and confidence which begat the same in us that there never was any reserve amongst us, nor anything kept secret from one another, to which she had used us from our early years.' The children's governess was Mistress Mary Menzies, daughter of Mr. Menzies of Raws, Writer to the Signet, 'well qualified in all respects.' This lady proved so efficient and so faithful that she remained in the family for many years, and after Rachel's marriage had the care of her children.

Mr. George Baillie had entered Parliament as member for Berwickshire, and as his political duties engrossed

him, he resigned the management of his estates into his wife's hands. She had a clear head and excellent business faculty, and the family fortunes improved greatly under her care, yet 'though her attention and economy reached to the smallest things . . . there never appeared in her the least air of narrowness, and so far was she from avarice, the common vice of age, that often my father said to her "I never saw the like of you, goodwife, the older you grow, you grow the more extravagant; but do as you please, providing I be in no debt."' This Lady Murray writes of her old age. But all along, her object in being thrifty was, 'that she might have more and better things to please other people with.' As in those past days of poverty, when her heart was as light as her purse, she had been contented and hospitable and gay, so she continued to be 'a lady frank and kind' to neighbours and tenants, rich and poor alike. She seems, after her marriage, still to have taken as great a share as ever in the responsibilities of the Polwarth family, and as time went on, these duties increased. She was certainly a matchmaker; she forwarded her brother Andrew's marriage with the Dowager Lady Douglas,—not very kindly to another lady, if the account Lady Anne Purves gives of her interference is true. 'She carried on the matter with such activity, which was her way when she took a thing in hand, that Sir Andrew was over-persuaded.' It was certainly under advice and pressure from her, that her eldest brother Patrick, the first Lord Polwarth, was induced to marry again after the death of his first wife, the gentle and devoted Irish cousin whom they all loved and mourned so deeply. Patrick had always been Lady Grisell's best-loved brother, and probably she hoped to rouse him from his grief and save his life.

He married Lady Jane Home (Jean o' the Hirsel), but he never recovered his health and spirits, and died some years later in 1709.

Lady Grisell's mother, Lady Marchmont, died at Edinburgh in 1703. Her children had gathered round her to bid her farewell, and she, looking round them all, missed Grisell, who was hiding behind the bed in an agony of grief. 'Where is Grisell?' the dying woman said; then, when she came out, her mother took her by the hand and said, 'My dear Grisell, blessed be you above them all, for a helpful child have you been to me.' In after years, she could never speak of her mother or of her brother Patrick without tears. Lord Marchmont gave her her mother's well-used Bible, with an 'appreciation' of his wife written in it. He begins, 'To Lady Grisell Hume, my beloved daughter,—My Heart, in remembrance of your mother, keep this Bible.' He goes on to describe her pleasant appearance, her 'grave majestic countenance. . . . She was of most firm and equal mind, never elevated by prosperity, nor debased or daunted by adversity. She was a wonderful stay and support to me in our exile and trouble. . . .' After saying much about her virtues and piety he ends with a note of anticipation: 'She was buried in my burying-place near the Canongate Church, where I have caused mark out a grave for myself close by hers.'

The younger Grisell, Lady Murray, writes with tender childish recollection of this dear grandmother. 'I lived much with her, and was her darling, being her first grandchild. I can only remember, which I do now in a lively manner, the sorrow I was in when she died.'

Lord Marchmont and his son-in-law, Mr. Baillie,

were among the promoters of the Act of Union, which united the parliaments of England and Scotland, and they also concerned themselves specially with the Act which secured the rights of the Scottish Church. In all things they showed themselves staunch to those principles and beliefs which they had professed in adverse times. But they were both men of generous temper. George Baillie's early manhood had been saddened by the circumstances of his father's death, but this, instead of hardening him, made him very sensitive to the sufferings of others. After the 'Fifteen' Rebellion, he took advantage of his connection with the Government to plead earnestly for mercy in the treatment of the prisoners, though he had no sympathy with the cause for which they had fought. In his speech in Parliament on their behalf he said he himself 'had been bred in the school of affliction, which had instructed him in both the reasonableness and necessity of showing mercy to others in like circumstances.' His house in London was open to the relatives and friends of those in trouble, whom he helped freely with all kindness and advice. When the death sentence was carried out on the two lords (Derwentwater and Kenmure), he 'stirred not out of his room nor dressed himself for some days; and sent the rest of his family to assist and comfort the near relations of those that suffered,' and it was his consideration and forethought that rescued the corpse of Lord Kenmure from the ignominious treatment accorded to the bodies of criminals. Doubtless, as he sat there in retirement, he saw again the scaffold and the crowds that thronged about the Cross at Edinburgh, thirty years before.

He took his parliamentary duties very seriously, attending strictly both in Edinburgh and afterwards

in London, while Lady Grisell looked after his affairs at home, as she was well able to do. He wrote to her by every post, and often to his children also. His letters to them, in that formal age, his daughter says, 'though we were young, were written with great ease and freedom, but always mixed with instruction and good advice.' During his stay in London, he 'would restrain himself in necessary expenses' so that he might bring each member of his family gifts carefully chosen—'something he thought we would like and was useful to us; and would have his trunk opened to give us them before he took time to rest himself, and showed a pleasure in doing it, I never can forget.' Along with his gifts he also used to bring some hundreds of little books and catechisms which he distributed amongst his tenants and servants. To surprise a friend with some little present delighted him, but 'he did not like receiving.' There, perhaps, came in the shy, awkward, Scottish pride. He was also very chary of anything that looked like buying favours; when he was at the Admiralty, a gentleman who was pressing some suit there, sent a parrot as a gift to Mr. Baillie's family. Even this harmless offering was returned, doubtless to the regret of the young people.

Lady Murray says of him with daughterly pride, that when he was in company of whatsoever quality and dignity, he was considered and respected as the first in it by all. Yet he was a very modest man, and probably enjoyed the honours that fell to him less heartily than his father-in-law did. (To Lord Marchmont, cordial and sociable, his high position in Scotland and the opportunities it gave him, must have been a constant gratification. He said himself that it was his wife's calm judgment that in his prosperous days 'kept

the balance of his deportment even.') Mr. Baillie excelled as a host; in his own house 'he was easy, civil, kind and hospitable to all,' watchful for every one's comfort, and especially so if any of the company 'was of inferior rank, or modest and backward; those he always took most notice of, and was greatly offended if he saw any belonged to him neglect them.' Himself a strong Presbyterian, he received with studied courtesy and kindness members of the Episcopal clergy, who were now, many of them, in poverty. He gave them money for the help of their poor brethren, and was very angry with his servants for not waiting on them with sufficient respect and bringing their horses promptly. He delighted in the company of children, and was a lover of animals, and of music—as in the old days in Holland, when with Christian's harpsichord and Sir Patrick's flute they all made merry together.

It is a pity that the manuscript book of Lady Grisell's songs, which her daughter speaks of, should have been lost, though 'many of them were interrupted, half writ, some broke off in the middle of a sentence.' Only two of those she wrote have been preserved, one of them a fragment. Her ballad 'Werena my heart licht,' is further enriched by an association with Burns. In the dark evening of his days at Dumfries he quoted the verse, applying it to himself:

> 'His bonnet stood aye fu' round on his broo,
> His auld ane look'd aye as well as some's new;
> But noo he lets 't wear ony gate it will hing,
> And casts himsel' dowie upon the corn-bing.'

With all her individuality, the story of Lady Grisell Baillie is the story of her family and her friends, for her happiness and her interests were entirely merged

in those of other people, as her time was devoted to caring and doing for them. She was whole-hearted in all she did. After spending a morning fatiguing herself in business and accounts, which she kept with the strict exactness of a merchant, 'she would join her family, as easy and cheerful as if she had been only diverting herself,' ready to throw herself into the next thing, whatever it was—a game of backgammon or some matter of family importance—with undivided interest and enjoyment. She was never preoccupied or care-worn, but 'possessed herself so thoroughly' that her duties seemed to demand little effort from her. She attacked them with the concentration and energy that a busy child brings to its play. Wise and quick-witted as she was, she was not a great talker, except in very intimate society. She accused herself of being, in youth, high-tempered and passionate, but she had disciplined herself into self-control. When her daughters lost their tempers and pled that they 'could not help it,' the excuse was one she would never accept.

Their daughter Grisell's early and unhappy marriage was a constant trial to both her parents. Mr. Murray of Stanhope was not the man Mr. Baillie had chosen for his daughter, but when she supported her suitor's claim with tears, her father gave way. 'Dear child,' he said, 'I cannot see you cry: you must do what pleases yourself; I give my consent.' This was in August 1710. The marriage proved a most unfortunate one, for the bridegroom was consumed by a jealousy that amounted to madness, and Mrs. Murray (afterwards Lady Murray) had to be protected by a legal separation from her husband. Her sister Rachel's marriage to Lord Binning happily was very different. Lady Grisell loved her daughter's husband as if he had been her own

son, and when his health broke down, in later years, she sacrificed the ease and familiarity of home to travel abroad for his sake. After her daughters grew up and were married, her hands were still full, for besides the attention she gave to her father's affairs, she took charge of the family of her brother Alexander (now Lord Polwarth), who had been sent abroad on a diplomatic mission. Lady Polwarth (who had been Margaret Campbell, the heiress of Cessnock) was apparently glad to resign the care of her sons' education to their aunt; it was Lady Grisell who induced the famous young mathematician Colin Maclaurin, already a professor in Aberdeen University, to go abroad with Lord Polwarth's eldest son George; she sent the younger boys to school in London, bought their clothes, paid their school bills, in short, did everything for them 'with the same zeal and affection she could do for her own.' The unkind misunderstanding that afterwards clouded her relations with these young people was one of the very few real unhappinesses in her life. Her father, old Lord Marchmont, now nearly eighty years of age, had left Redbraes Castle, empty as it was of wife and children, and had come to live at Berwick. His daughter, Lady Julian Bellingham, lived with him. She was the only one of the Humes whose high spirits had carried her into recklessness, for she had made a hasty and imprudent marriage. Captain Bellingham was no better than an adventurer. The affair was the talk of the town. Poor Lady Julian afterwards confessed herself well punished, when, in the lodging to which the runaway couple had betaken themselves, she overheard her own story, with a hundred malicious comments, retailed by the gossiping tongues of the day. She was now a widow, glad, doubtless, of

the shelter and kindness of her father's roof. Lady Grisell, who, on account of her husband's official duties, now spent a good deal of time in London, kept her father constantly in mind, sending him by every post newspapers, books, and pamphlets that would interest him, and writing to him herself regularly. She travelled to Scotland (a long fatiguing journey) expressly to see him. On one of these last visits, when a good many of the family had gathered to meet Lady Grisell and her daughter Lady Murray, they kept up the family traditions of mirth and heartiness by having a dance. Fourteen of the company were children and grandchildren of the old earl, who was too weak to walk downstairs, but insisted on being carried down to join in the revels; saying though he could not dance with them, he could beat time with his foot, 'which he did, and bid us dance as long as we could; it was the best medicine he knew, for at the same time it gave exercise to the body, it cheered the mind.' We know what he looked like as he sat there smiling and nodding to the music, for there is a portrait of him in extreme old age—a benevolent, rather wizard-looking figure, with a long beard, wearing a cap and a green garment like a Jewish gabardine. When it was time for the old man to be carried upstairs again, the dancing was stopped, so as not to disturb him; but he sent a message down bidding them go on, that their cheerful noise would only lull him to sleep. He believed, like the Fiddler of Rooney, that

> 'The good are always the merry,
> Save by an evil chance:
> And the merry love the fiddle,
> And the merry love to dance.'

This good man's mirth was no laughter of fools, but was

rooted in fear of God and love of his fellow-men. He died in August 1724, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, and was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Alexander, who was still abroad at the time of his father's death.

Years passed over Lady Grisell's head, old age was approaching, but she carried herself as bravely as ever, and was as ready to face new duties and new scenes as in the high adventurous days of her youth. In 1731 she went abroad with her husband and family, on account of Lord Binning's health. Mr. Baillie, by this time, had retired from public life, but he willingly sacrificed his love of home and quiet, rather than divide the family party. Perhaps Lady Binning's children remained in Scotland under the well-proved care of Mistress May Menzies; she and her husband, her sister Lady Murray, with their father and mother, travelled together. They went first to Holland, and visited Utrecht, the former asylum of the family. Lady Grisell had not been there since she left it, at the Revolution, more than forty years before, but her memories of the place were marvellously fresh and accurate, and she delighted in showing her daughters the actual scenes of so many of her stories and recollections. Her knowledge of Dutch which, at first, seemed quite gone, revived also, so that she was able to interpret and do business for the whole party. She went with special eagerness to see the house, full of dear memories of the living and the dead, in which they had all lived so happily long ago; she was deeply hurt and disappointed at being refused admittance. 'They would not let her in, by no arguments either of words or of money, for no reason but for fear of dirtying the house. She offered to put off her shoes,

but nothing could prevail.' It must have been hard for Lady Grisell, who was not used to fail in carrying her point.

They finally settled at Naples for sixteen months. They quickly made friends in the Italian society of the town, as well as among the English resident there, and Lady Grisell, with her usual energy, set herself busily with grammar and dictionary to learn Italian, so as to be able to give her own orders to the servants, and in the shops. She did not like to feel herself dependent even on her daughters as interpreters. The charming Scotch family must have been a welcome addition to the community there, especially as Lady Murray says her parents 'showed a heartiness and hospitality not customary in that place, and gained the hearts and admiration of all.' Mr. Baillie's family, in their turn, held in ever grateful remembrance the kindness they received from these Neapolitan friends, especially as Lord Binning's illness increased. During his last hours they all—Roman Catholic Italians as well as English Protestants—joined with Mr. Baillie in prayer for the dying man, and every service that friendship and sympathy could offer, they gave afterwards. His death was deeply lamented by his wife's family. Lady Grisell grieved for him as for an only son, and never ceased to wear mourning for him. She said she would have begged her bread willingly, if that would have saved his life. The disappointment and distress that had followed Grisell Murray's marriage doubtless gave the family a still keener sense of Lord Binning's worth. His sons took his place in their grandmother's affections, and for their sake, Mr. Baillie and she went afterwards to live at Oxford. Doubtless Lady Grisell was happier with some one to plan and care for. Here,

in 1738, her husband died. This was the heaviest blow that had fallen upon her. They had lived together for forty-eight happy years, in the most complete confidence and unclouded affection: 'never a jar between us,' she wrote herself; when, in old age, deafness and infirmity sometimes made him speak hastily, he would ask her pardon with a kiss. They were lovers to the end, for she 'felt the same ardent love and desire to please him in the smallest trifle, that she felt at their first acquaintance. . . . He never went abroad but she went to the window to look after him; and so she did, that very day he fell ill, the last time he was abroad, never taking her eyes from him as long as he was in sight.' He was taken north to Mellerstain and buried there; with calm foresight he had himself ordered the austere simplicity which ruled all the arrangements. It angered him to see 'vanity carried beyond the grave,' as he once said.

Lady Grisell's affectionate daughters thought she would never again recover strength and spirits. She had a severe illness, and 'with joy' would have let herself sink under it. But duty, she felt, recalled her to life. She must live, if for no better reason than to protect her family from the unjust claims of Sir Alexander Murray, who was still legally her daughter's husband. She lived on two years longer in Oxford, to be near her grandsons, but she was pining all the time from loneliness and inactivity. When, in 1740, their course at Oxford was finished, she went with them to London, to bid them farewell before they went abroad. Though she was now a woman of seventy-five, she could and did still busy herself over the details of their equipment and their journey. After bidding them farewell, she returned to her Scottish home. The associations of

Mellerstain, where she had not lived since her husband's death, gave her a sort of sad happiness. She loved the place, but her pleasure in its beauty, and in the improvements that had been made, was constantly checked by her sense of loss: 'What is all this to me, since your father does not see and enjoy it,' she would say to her daughters, with a burst of tears. The frost of age could not chill the warmth of her emotions:

> 'Were I young for thee as I hae been,
> We should hae been galloping down on yon green,
> And linking out o'er yon lily-white lea;
> And wow! gin I were but young for thee!'

So she had written, in the lively imagination of youth, and here, among her own people, in the peace of familiar scenes, she had hoped to spend her remaining years, but the unselfishness that had ruled her whole life drove her forth once more. For the welfare again of the young generation, she removed her household to London. In September 1744, she set out cheerfully on the long journey, hazardous indeed for one of her years, saying frankly she knew she might die upon the road. Sad as she was at leaving Mellerstain (for the last time, as she told her daughters), there is a gleam of the old spirit in the willingness with which she set out, and in her alertness on the way: she was up first in the morning, and gave all the orders herself in the inns at which they rested, never complaining of fatigue, though they had a slow disagreeable journey, with rainy weather and heavy roads. The following year was the fateful year of the Forty-Five. It was 'a great affliction to her; the distress of her country and her friends went near her heart, and made great impression on her health and spirits.' The daughter of Patrick Hume, and the

daughter-in-law of Baillie of Jerviswood, could be no friend of the Stuart cause, but she grieved over 'the desolation of her poor country,' and the implication of many of her friends in the troubles that ensued. It was a relief to her to follow her husband's example in giving what assistance and sympathy she could to those who were paying the penalties of the law in London. Her own affairs were, indeed, greatly embarrassed by the confusion in Scotland. Her agent could not forward her rents, for business was paralysed while Edinburgh was in the hands of the Highlanders. Her independence was so great that she refused to accept a temporary loan from friends. (She who had seen such changes of fortune could not regard the future with certainty.) 'She sent for her butcher, baker, brewer, etc., whom she regularly paid every month; told them she could not then do so, and perhaps might never be able to pay them at all; of which she thought it just to give them warning, that they might choose whether they could continue to serve her.' They were all very glad to do this. It was at this time that one of her grandsons—those fine young men for whom she had saved, and planned, and sacrificed her own ease and wishes—now showed what stuff he was of. He had a horse, a favourite animal; unknown to anybody, he one day sold it, and brought her the money; 'though but eighteen pound, it was very acceptable in the family, which every one got a share of for their little necessary.' With her training, the want of money troubled her little, 'but the general distress lay near her heart.'

As winter approached, she caught a cold which was then 'epidemical.' She had long withstood the indulgences due to her age, and adhered to her early

morning hours, though she confessed she never got up willingly—'that none could have a greater temptation for lying in bed, yet she did it not.' (She could not otherwise have overtaken all the business she did, and have had leisure to share with her friends.) She did not suffer long from the limitations of illness—only one week. She died on the 6th December, and according to her wish was carried north to Berwickshire to be buried with her husband. That silent journey to Scotland had been in her mind ever since she had bidden farewell to Mellerstain. As a pilgrim might seek sepulchre in some holy place, she longed after a resting-place in her own country, by her husband's side. She would have been no true Scotswoman otherwise,—and all in keeping, too, were the instructions she gave her daughter when she was dying, and the little black purse, with the money she had provided against the needs of this last solemn way-going, kept resolutely from other uses. No stranger's hands touched her, as she had begged they might not. The devotion of her family fulfilled every office, watched by her in love and loyalty, and followed her to the grave. She was buried at Mellerstain on the 25th December, Christmas Day, the anniversary of her birthday, 'a day never to be forgot by her family; as it brought *her* into the world, who was so great a blessing to us and also hid and buried her from us.'

There in the peaceful Border country she sleeps, with her descendants lying round her in the little aisle. The shadows of the great trees fall around, and many-windowed Mellerstain stands on the slope of the hill with the sunlight shining on its panes, speaking comfortable things of human happiness and well-

being. The whole landscape in its sober, wholesome beauty (nothing desolate, or wasted, or tragical) seems to be in key with the family story, and especially with its best-known heroine, Lady Grisell, that most complete example of a Scots gentlewoman of the olden time.

## QUEEN LOUISA OF PRUSSIA

AMONG the household divinities of a German home,—in the *gute Stube* of a country *Pfarrhaus*, or Berlin shopkeeper's modest dwelling, or in the *salon* of the more ambitious,—go where you will, you find ranged in a place of honour a portrait of Queen Louisa, the most popular being the well-known one by Richter, which in its romantic sentiment and charm has always made so sure an appeal to German feeling. In it the figure of the beautiful youthful *Landesmutter* is shown arrayed in flowing robes, descending a flight of steps, as from a pillared portico. The background of stormy cloud, through which the light is seen breaking, is symbolic of the shattering experiences through which the people and rulers of Prussia passed in the queen's lifetime,—experiences which laid the foundation of the modern German Empire. Against that stormy background of war and misfortune, her figure, idealised by the love and admiration of her country-folk into something almost mythical, shines from the pages of history, gracious, beneficent, and serene. The original portrait is in the picture-gallery at Cologne. The Emperor William I. looking at it, said, 'Eine wunderschöne Dame, aber sie ist nicht meine Mutter.' Perhaps Madame le Brun's presentment of her, as given here, so full of artless gaiety and charm, tells us more truly what she looked like in her happy youthful days.

QUEEN LOUISA OF PRUSSIA
[illegible]

She was born in the town of Hanover on 10th March 1776. Her father, Prince Charles of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, was the younger brother of the reigning Duke: their sister, the Princess Sophie Charlotte, was our English 'Good Queen Charlotte.' When she sailed to England as the bride of George III., her brothers accompanied her. Prince Charles afterwards took service with the English troops abroad, and King George eventually appointed him Governor of Hanover and commandant of the forces there. He married Princess Frederica of Hesse-Darmstadt, and went to live at Hanover, where his children were born, Charlotte, Theresa,—Louisa was the third; next her came the mirthful Frederica, with whom much of her life was to be shared; her brother George was the youngest.

The old Electoral Palace at Hanover, in which Louisa's earliest days were passed, was a gloomy, oppressive building. The first home of Prince and Princess Charles, though much less grand, was a happier place; it was a spreading one-story house, built of wood, a sunny and cheerful dwelling in the suburbs of the town. Afterwards the family removed from the town-palace to Herrenhausen, the suburban residence of the Electors, a miniature Versailles, with beautiful elaborate gardens and orangeries, where the children spent many a happy day in play. They were exceptionally fortunate children, for they had devoted and sympathetic parents, and, as their father was not a ruling prince, they were brought up in freedom from the ceremonial of court-life, never more rigid nor minute than when practised within the narrow limits of a German *Hof*.

Louisa from the first was a most winning and charming child, fair haired and blue-eyed. There is

a portrait of the father and mother, with a baby-likeness introduced in a picture the lady holds in her hand, which gives us a good idea of what these merry little Mecklenburgers looked like, with their round, fair faces, and big, blue eyes, inherited from their mother. She, alas! soon left them, for Louisa was only six years old when she died; yet she had taken so great a hold of the child's heart, that all her life afterwards for any one 'to be motherless' was a sure claim on Louisa's pity, and when she lay dying, her mind wandered back to the mother whom she had only known in infancy. Her father married again, giving to his children as their second mother, his wife's sister, their favourite aunt Charlotte.

Before this event took place, Louisa made her first journey to Darmstadt to visit her mother's relatives there. Her grand-uncle, Louis IX., was the reigning Landgrave, but he was absorbed in military affairs, and left the local government very much in the hands of his wife, Caroline of Zweibrücken, an able lady. Under her influence Darmstadt became a centre of that rising interest in philosophical and literary things, associated with the great names of that age, Kant and Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller—to mention the most familiar and the greatest. The 'German spirit' had wakened, and was seeking to realise itself. Hitherto France had set the fashion in all that was cultivated and civilised; the reigning princes and nobles of the Empire, however petty their state, had modelled themselves on *le Grand Monarque*, Louis XIV.; and the language of their courts was French. But the star of the French monarchy was soon to set in blood, and after the *débâcle*—the Revolution, and the Napoleonic wars—new worlds were to rise out of the ruins.

The winds of change had not yet begun to blow rudely on the ancient system in Germany, though the first breath of the new spirit had gone abroad. Twice in her girlhood the Princess Louisa was to see the crowning of the successor of Charlemagne at Frankfort-on-the-Maine. But a more intimate world lay round about her in her childhood, and doubtless she learnt history partly from the doings of her own relatives. Her first visit away from home was spent with her grandmother at Darmstadt. She was the Princess George William, a wise and clever woman, and a ruling power in the place, though she was only the widow of the younger brother of the reigning Landgrave (Louis IX.). She must have received the delightful child—her own daughter's child—with pleasure and affection, for she loved children and understood them. In 1784, when Louisa was eight years old, the whole family came to Darmstadt, to be present at their father's second marriage. A year later his wife died, after giving birth to a son, Charles; and, after a few months of loneliness in Hanover, Prince Charles resolved to resign his governorship and bring his family to Darmstadt, where they could have the care and guidance of their grandmother. His eldest daughter Charlotte had been married lately to the Duke of Hildburghausen. The three other girls, Theresa, Louisa, and Frederica, were placed under the charge of Princess George in the Old Palace at Darmstadt.

The education of the young princesses was not conducted in any haphazard way. Princess George William believed in guiding rather than forcing the inclinations of children, and she had many arguments with their governess, Mademoiselle Agier, who was harsh in her methods. Afterwards, when Queen Louisa was read-

ing with her husband Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea*, they came on the lines :

'Denn wir können die Kinder nach unserem Sinne nicht formen;
So wie Gott sie uns gab, so muss man sie haben und lieben.'

'(For we cannot mould our children according to our own ideas;
Just as God gave them to us, we must receive them and love them.')

'That reminds me of grandmamma remonstrating with Mademoiselle Agier,' she said, with a smile of recollection.

In the end Mademoiselle Agier had to go, and Princess George William was fortunate in her choice of a successor, Mademoiselle de Gélieux, daughter of a Protestant clergyman at Neuchâtel. She was a woman of high character and noble aims. She drew out all that was best in her young charges,—training them in generosity and unselfishness, yet without anything that was morbid or overstrained. They all loved her dearly, and long afterwards, when she had gone back to her home at Neuchâtel, Queen Louisa continued to correspond with her. She agreed with the old princess in laying chief stress upon the building up of character, and on the good manners that spring from the natural play of a good disposition. If her pupils did not turn out learned, Louisa at any rate had—what was more valuable—a desire for knowledge. Through all her busy life, she sought time for reading and study, bringing to it a patient, earnest-minded determination to *understand*. If she was puzzled by a reference, or an unfamiliar word (as when she asked Herr Scheffner to explain the word *hierarchy* to her), she did not rest till she understood it. As she said herself, 'only stupid people are too much ashamed of their ignorance to ask questions.'

Unlike the ladies of most German courts at that

time, Princess George William spoke her own language habitually, and so, besides learning French in the schoolroom, her grand-daughters grew up with a fluent knowledge of their native tongue. In summer, when they accompanied her to Braunshardt, a charming home near Darmstadt, or to her own property of Broich near Düsseldorf, they went with Mademoiselle de Gélieux to visit among their poorer neighbours, and to help them as they could. Louisa's generous nature overflowed with kindness, and she had to learn by stern reproof from the wise grandmother that charity may become self-indulgence when it is given at the expense of others. Her father was far from rich, and the young princesses had often to learn to 'do without' themselves. We are told that they sewed their own silk shoes, which they wore on state occasions. Contentment and mirth made their innocent days still brighter. Princess George William, a South German herself, encouraged their gaiety, and, as she watched their growing beauty, began to dream of great alliances for them, poor though they were. Louisa was specially lovely,—tall and graceful, with fair complexion, and big laughing blue eyes, bright yellow hair that hung in curls about her face,—a joyous vision of youth and happiness. She had serious hours too; she looked upon her confirmation as a definite step on the heavenly road; and behind all her gay, good-humoured willingness to please and be pleased, were hidden earnest, youthful thoughts of duty and of religion, yet with nothing morbid or introspective in them. She seems one of those happy souls who are born with an affinity for what is good, whose days are 'joined each to each in natural piety.' The 'Good Electress,' Louisa of Orange-Nassau, who married that Elector of Brandenburg, known as the 'Great Elector,'

father of the first King of Prussia, was one of her special heroines. Often she must have heard the musical chimes of the bells in the tower of the Darmstadt Landgrave's castle ring out the familiar melody of the hymn 'Jesus meine Zuversicht,'[1] believed to have been written by the 'Good' Louisa. Afterwards the link with her memory was to be drawn closer.

Meantime the routine of life in the Old Palace was varied by journeys, under the grandmother's wing. Louisa saw Strasbourg, the rich and beautiful Rhine country, the Netherlands, and the sea. The leisurely travelling of those days made such a tour a more important experience than we should think it now.

Louisa's visits to Frankfort are of special interest. Here in the year 1790 she saw Leopold II. crowned as head of the Holy Roman Empire with many old-world rites and ceremonies, and two years later, after his death in 1792, she was at the coronation of his son Francis II., the last of the successors of Charlemagne. For the sovereignty of the ancient emperors had become nothing but a splendid title—a mere phantom of reality—and it remained for Napoleon to give it the final death-blow, when, after Austerlitz, he formed the Confederation of the Rhine. No wonder that the citizens of Frankfort, at this coronation of Leopold—when he feasted with his princes in the ancient hall in the Römer, hung round with the portraits of the emperors before him—no wonder they told gloomily that, when the next emperor's portrait hung there, the last place would be filled, and *then*, as it had been long foretold, the empire would come to an end.

Long before the Coronation, the Frankforters were busy preparing for guests, for the city was divided into

[1] Translated in *Lyra Germanica*, 'Jesus my Redeemer lives.'

seven districts, one for each Elector, and the best accommodation was put at the disposal of these princes with their retinues. As the coronation day approached they arrived, one after another, entering the city in state, with a pomp and pageantry that were truly mediæval. With trains of followers in brilliant costumes and uniforms, the great painted chariots in which they rode, drawn by teams of horses covered with rich housings, the banners, the glittering weapons, all made a brave show, and, as one procession after another came in, the interest and excitement of the inhabitants mounted, until the final crowning rites were observed in the cathedral. Every detail was ordered according to regulations laid down in the Golden Bull, a document of the time of the Emperor Charles IV. (1356).

Princess George William had brought her three grandchildren with her, Louisa, Frederica, and George. Several of their relatives were to take part in the ceremonies. But the young people, who were to see all this solemn splendour vanish 'like the baseless fabric of a vision,' were as much interested in their hostess, in her stories, and in the wonderful pump in her back garden, as they were in the crowds and show. For it so befell that they were the guests of Frau Rath Goethe, the mother of the great poet, and the visit was a memorable one on both sides. Frau Goethe was a widow, her son was at Weimar, and she lived alone in the house in the Hirschgraben. She was lively and charming, and certainly the young princesses must have thought her so, for she encouraged their frolics. When they rushed out to amuse themselves by pumping water into the shell-shaped cistern at the back of the house, it was said that she locked the door on their lady-in-waiting, to prevent her from interfering with them.

She remained on affectionate terms with them all her life.

The elaborate ceremonies were over at last in cathedral and banqueting-hall, not without peril of strife over points of order, and impassioned appeals to the Grand Chamberlain, who, poor man, sought distractedly for guidance among records which went back to the days of Charlemagne. The story of the thirty-seventh dish, which the four counts—who had in turn carried in the other thirty-six to the emperor's table—refused to touch, would need a volume to itself, and cannot be recounted here. Two years later, Leopold had died; Louisa was again at Frankfort. She saw his son Francis II. crowned, the last of the mediæval emperors, with war and revolution knocking at the doors. His portrait on the wall was indeed to be the last of the line, and no one guessed that the girl of sixteen who looked on, stirred with curiosity and romantic interest, was to be the link between that past age and the world waiting to be born,—that her son would be the first emperor of the new German *Reich.*

Meanwhile, the shrewd grandmother princess had been hoping and planning for the future of her fledglings. She had taken pains that their charms should not be quite unknown among the courtly circle of their relatives, for they had accompanied her, as we have seen, on visits, where their beauty and the simplicity of their good manners pleased everybody. Theresa had married the Hereditary Prince of Thurn and Taxis. Louisa and Frederica remained to be provided for.

Love and war,—these were the controlling forces in Louisa's destinies. Prussia and Austria had taken up arms against France, but their declaration of hostility, instead of checking the Revolution, only hurried the

unhappy King Louis to the scaffold. The armies met at Valmy, where a battle was fought that gave victory to neither side. The undefeated troops of the newly-declared Republic entered the Rhineland, and, pressing on, took the towns of Mainz and Frankfort. This brought them too near Darmstadt, and Princess George William thought it prudent to retreat, with her granddaughters, to Hildburghausen, in Thuringia, the home of Duchess Charlotte, Louisa's eldest sister. She was cultivated and musical (her family name was 'Singing Lottie'), and the four sisters—for Theresa of Thurn and Taxis had also been sent here, to be safe out of the way of trouble—spent the winter of 1792 together, happy in each other's charming society. When the tide of war rolled back, and Frankfort was rid of the French troops, Princess George resolved to visit that town on her return journey. The young princesses knew nothing of her benevolent plotting, and it seemed to them entirely an accident that their visit should coincide with the presence at Frankfort of the King of Prussia, Frederick William II., and his two eldest sons, who had been making their first campaign with the troops. King Frederick William had married a Darmstadt princess,—a lady whom he systematically neglected, though her relatives do not seem to have resented this. The Princess George must have been satisfied herself as to the character of the Crown Prince, or she would hardly have furthered this match as she did. Certainly the Court of Berlin, where she aspired to send her beloved and innocent Louisa, was a very evil place. But the sequel to the meeting delighted everybody, for it was apparently a case of love at first sight, when the Crown Prince and his brother Louis met the two princesses at a ball given in their honour.

No one was more pleased than the King of Prussia himself: he could afford to disregard the absence of wedding portions. A letter to Berlin, in which the pleasure-loving monarch confesses that he has been so engaged with fêtes that for some days he has had no time for correspondence, goes on to speak of the delightful grandchildren of Princess George William, 'as beautiful as angels. I saw them for the first time in the theatre, just before the play began. I was so overcome with admiration that I hardly knew what I was saying or doing when their grandmother presented them to me. I only wished that my sons could see them, and fall in love with them. Next day, however, the young people were introduced at a ball. The princes were simply fascinated. I did my best to let them see as much as possible of our fair visitors, that they might get to know them. As far as I can judge, the two angels are as good as they are beautiful. When we found that the princes were very much in love, we just settled the matter out of hand. The princesses gave their consent, and the betrothal will take place in due course, probably at Mannheim. My eldest son will marry the elder princess, his brother the younger.'

The Crown Prince, afterwards Frederick William III., was in his twenty-third year — a youth of somewhat cheerless temper, reserved, and undemonstrative, stiffly moral — in every way a contrast to his father, who was lax in everything but his religious opinions, which were of the highest orthodoxy. There is an infant portrait of the prince, where we see him, a merry and bright-eyed child, showering roses round him, but as he grew up he became shy and moody. His tutor, Behnisch, was gloomy and hypochondriacal; his mother was unhappy; we can hardly wonder that he

became morbid and self-distrustful. His confidence was difficult to win; he mistrusted his own judgment, and yet was unwilling to accept guidance from others. He was altogether the opposite of the gay, loving, confident, impulsive Louisa; yet in spite of his cold demeanour, it was a true exchange of hearts. 'I felt when I first saw her "'Tis she, or none on earth,"' he said, in speaking of their first meeting long afterwards to Bishop Eylert. He was deeply attached to his brother Louis, and the double betrothal must have heightened the young people's joy. Louisa would not have to part with Frederica, her lifelong companion and playmate: they were all to go to Berlin, to be married and happy together.

Their friends were delighted. Duchess Lottie wrote to her sister Theresa, thanking Providence for having done 'more than we could have ventured to wish for . . . in spite of all difficulties everything had turned out so well. Papa is looking at everything through rose-coloured spectacles.'

Princess Louisa's own letters to her sisters, while they express complete satisfaction with the man of her choice, reveal what manner of lover he was: 'He says what he means with no useless multiplication of words . . . when he tells me that I am pleasing,—that he thinks me good, I can believe it, for he has never said a flattering word to me yet.' Though the Crown Prince could not fly into enthusiastic raptures, he was to prove himself faithful and constant. 'Kinder and more considerate than ever,' Louisa wrote of him, years after, when they had been through the tempest together,—'I feel as if my lover and bridegroom had come back.'

During the summer of 1793, the Prussian troops

remained in occupation of the German frontiers, while the war with France continued. The betrothed couples met frequently. Once the two young princesses paid a visit to their future husbands in camp, where they were seen and admired by Goethe, who had accompanied there his friend and 'patron' the Duke of Weimar. The poet watched the two fair creatures from his tent, comparing them in their feminine grace to angel beings from another sphere visiting the fields of war.

This year events in Poland divided the interests of the King of Prussia and the Emperor Francis, and their combined movement against France came to a rather feeble end. Troops were withdrawn, and the young princes of Prussia went home from their first soldiering to be received with shouts of welcome by the people of Berlin. The Crown Prince had earned a reputation for bravery and courage,—a reputation he never belied, but all his life he looked upon war as wasteful and abhorrent, and he could hardly be persuaded to take up arms even in a just quarrel. This was in December, and the preparations which had been making for the double royal marriage were pushed forward with all speed. It was to take place at Christmas. Louisa had moments of apprehension, as she thought of herself at the Court of Berlin, separated from the friends and guides of her youth. 'Be very forbearing with me,' she wrote to her lover. 'I have my faults, and you scarcely know me yet. Do not demand too much from me. I shall probably make mistakes, but let us be happy notwithstanding.' And again,—'I have been much less anxious—God will surely give me strength, and lead me, and never forsake me. My fervent prayers will move Him, and

my religious principles will shield me from evil. Be quite sure that I love and honour you, that I will do everything in the world to please you.'

Early on the 13th December the two brides set out from Darmstadt, accompanied by their father, grandmother, and brother George. The journey took more than a week to accomplish, for they could not travel after dark, and the December days were short. On the evening of the 21st they reached Potsdam, where troops of horsemen had ridden out to meet them, blowing horns of welcome; and, as they drove through the streets lined with crowds in gala costume, candles burned in every window, and banners and trumpets gave gallant greetings. Better still, the two bridegrooms were waiting at the entrance of the Royal Palace to receive the travellers; and here, too, Louisa made the acquaintance of the trusty, warm-hearted, ceremonious old lady, who was to guide and serve her so faithfully in the years to come. This was the Countess von Voss, whom the king had appointed Mistress of the Household to the young princess. Though the punctilious etiquette of the old court lady was oppressive at times, yet her discretion and knowledge of the world were of great value to Louisa in the difficult days that lay immediately before the young bride.

All this was but a prelude to the state entry of the capital, which the princesses made on the following day. More crowds and cheering, guildsmen in coats all the colours of the rainbow, soldiers at the salute, triumphal arches, flowers, poems! No wonder that Princess Louisa wrote, 'How anxiously my heart was beating when I drew near the gates of Berlin, and received tokens of honour and welcome, which then I had done

nothing to deserve! It was a solemn hour for me.' Perhaps what pleased her most was the sight of the band of girls dressed in white and pink, who awaited her at the great triumphal arch which had been erected at the end of Unter den Linden. The procession stopped, a little girl approached the carriage, and recited a poem in honour of the stranger princess. Louisa leaned forward and kissed the child: the people cheered, but Countess Voss exclaimed in horror, 'Mein Gott! what has your Highness done!'

'Must I never do that again?' said Louisa, half startled and half laughing.

From that hour began her dominion over the hearts of the people of Prussia, first as a princess, artless, beautiful, and kind; later were to come those experiences which crowned her in the eyes of the people with the greater qualities of a heroine,—a martyr almost.

King Frederick William stood at a window of his palace, and noted with satisfaction the crowds and the applause. The Crown Prince and his brother again met their brides, and conducted them to the presence of the king and assembled officials. Next day, 24th December, being Christmas Eve, that most glad and sacred day in every German household, was celebrated the marriage of Princess Louisa and the heir to the Prussian throne. They were married, according to precedent, in the wonderful 'White Drawing-room' of the royal residence, a glittering room, full of mirrors and silver ornament, like a glass palace in a fairy-tale; the musicians' gallery at the end had been made of silver, but Frederick the Great had melted it down to pay for his wars, and now it was only plated. Into this gleaming apartment the bridal party moved, not all of them hopeful or happy; poor Queen Frederica,

the bridegroom's mother, hiding her tears with her fan, was agitated and sad. Another queen was there, too, who had known loneliness and neglect, the dowager Elizabeth Christian, widow of the great Frederick. But the young bride, as she passed along in the stiff magnificence of her robe of cloth of silver, with diamonds gleaming on her breast, looked, as an onlooker describes her, all grace and kindness; her 'clear intelligent eyes' rested on her bridegroom with a look of trustful affection. Court-Preacher Sack married them according to the rites of the Reformed Church: afterwards there was a banquet and a ball, opened with the historic *Fackeltanz*, or torch-dance, a picturesque survival from who knows what treading of fire-circles in pagan times. All the Royal Family took part in it. Two days later, Prince Louis and Princess Frederica were married with further rejoicings. *Their* united happiness was to be of short duration, for three years later the prince died of typhus fever.

The year that followed was probably the most critical in Louisa's life. Like the lady among the 'rabble rout' in the masque of *Comus*, she came 'through hard assays' at the Court of Berlin. Fêted, caressed, and flattered, surrounded by intrigues of which she was only dimly conscious, there must have been something wonderfully strong and pure in her nature, that kept unblemished 'her faith, her patience, and her truth.' Her great capacity for enjoyment, her youth and inexperience, made the test still more searching. She was a favourite with her bad old father-in-law. When her birthday came round in March—her first birthday in Berlin—he sent her the key of the Oranienburg Palace, which he had had redecorated and prepared for her as a birthday present. It had been

built and named for the Princess of Orange, the 'Good' Louisa. When she thanked him, he asked if the *Geburtstagskind* would take anything further? 'A handful of gold to give to some of the poor people,' she replied. 'And how large must the handful be?' 'As large as the king's heart.' Many a story the Berliners came to tell afterwards of Louisa's generosity. She learnt some hard lessons in these first months, when she found that the Crown Princess must never be off guard, even towards the most fair-seeming advances.

Her husband, who was constitutionally bored by court ceremonies, and by 'society,' was glad to retire with her to Frederick the Great's Sans Souci at Potsdam, that first spring after they were married, where they had six peaceful weeks together, enjoying the April freshness of the woods and gardens. Escaped from Berlin, there was little to remind them of the heavy splendour of their rank, except the courtly solemnities of the Countess Voss, who amused them by her conscientious efforts to maintain palace etiquette among the simplicities of country life. Yet the good *Oberhofmeisterin* was devoted to her young princess; and many a weary mile she travelled in attendance on her, in the journeys they made together afterwards, jolted over rough country roads,—the poor old lady swaying, as Queen Louisa said, 'like a card-board figure,' helpless with fatigue.

The Crown Prince indulged his taste still further by buying for himself the estate of Paretz, near Potsdam, where he had a simple country house built, and here he came with his family summer after summer, delighting in the ease and freedom of the life, and sharing in the country festivals. Louisa and her ladies gratified

the peasants by appearing at these gatherings in their court dresses, so as to do honour to their humble neighbours. Even Countess Voss unbent on such occasions, for, as her friends well knew, there was much good-humour and kindness behind her formality.

Certainly these were happy years at Paretz and Oranienburg, and as children came one after another, Louisa showed herself an adorable mother. The first little daughter never drew breath in this world; then in 1795 her eldest son Frederick William was born; two years later came his brother William, who, seventy-three years afterwards, was to carry the Prussian eagles into Paris. This year (1797) King Frederick William II. died; Louisa and her prince were summoned to the responsibilities of a throne. 'May God in His mercy support my husband in his difficult task,' she wrote to her father. 'It is far more difficult than any of us think,' she added, showing her sagacity in what might have been a merely conventional utterance. For indeed all was not well with the State of Prussia, and though there was to be a season of fair weather, and happy relations between king and queen and people, the conditions of the kingdom were unhealthy. The treasury was empty, debt had accumulated, the officials were corrupt, the country-people were still serfs, and the whole social structure was so rigid, that wholesome change and growth were impossible.

If the king had immediately called to his help able and vigorous men, like the Baron vom Stein (afterwards the great Prussian Minister), Scharnhorst the reformer of the army, Hardenberg and others, the story of Prussia might have been very different. But he continued to depend on the ministers who used to advise his father, and he clung obstinately to the

principle of maintaining Prussia's neutrality in the coalitions against France. Louisa, though at this time she kept herself strictly apart from politics, realised long before the king did, that it was the policy of Napoleon to make terms with his neighbours only until the suitable time came for him to fall upon them and devour them. 'It would be Prussia's turn to be last devoured.'

Louisa's nature grew with its widened opportunities. The new court attracted to Berlin the famous men of the time. Schiller came, and Jean Paul Richter, whom the queen had met in early days at Hildburghausen. The romantic author may well have enjoyed himself in Berlin. 'Hitherto,' he wrote, 'I have adored girls. Here I find the girls all ready to adore me. Heavens! how frank and unaffected and kindly and pretty they are! Many a lock of hair have I received. Many a one has severed its connection with my own head. I really think that if I had gone into the business with a view to profit I might have made as much by the crop on the outside of my scalp as by the ideas which sprout beneath it!' Queen Louisa he called 'the crowned Aphrodite, the lovely queen who wrote and invited me to Sans Souci. I sat at table with her, and she showed me all round the palace.' Many other famous names occur among the friends of the king and queen,—William von Humboldt, Fichte, Schlegel,—French emigrés too, like Madame de Staël. Yet Louisa gave herself no pedantic airs of learning. She thought Professor Süvern was flattering her when he complimented her on her historical judgment. 'He was dazzled by my association with the idea of royalty. I told him that my opinions, favourable or otherwise, could have no possible value for an authority on history.'

There was plenty of gaiety too, at court, plays and revels. The queen had always loved dancing. A story of the Darmstadt days tells how once her grandmother, displeased with her for being late, drove off without her to a ball at the palace. Louisa, nothing daunted, gathered up her skirts, and ran through the streets, arriving in time to appear with the others. Now, at Berlin, she was the central figure, the crowning ornament of every festivity. 'Seldom indeed has the consort of a military ruler had such opportunities of becoming known to her husband's subjects as the wife of Frederick William III. On public occasions, and at state functions, her courtesy, tact, and ready utterance atoned for the king's lack of social gifts. Like those classic heroines who contrived to possess themselves of the girdle of Venus, her charm was irresistible. Young people of good standing, young poets and literary men, and, most important of all, the rank and file of the community, were peculiarly susceptible to her influence.' [1]

Her beauty was universally acknowledged. An English lady who saw her at court wrote of her: 'She reminded me of Burke's star, glittering with life, splendour, and joy, and realised all the fanciful ideas one forms in one's infancy of the young, gay, beautiful and magnificent queens in the *Arabian Nights*.' Her figure was tall and graceful, her fair hair and complexion, her blue eyes, so clear and truthful in their gaze, were considered perfect. Her mouth was irregular and critics said her feet and hands were too large, but 'it took nothing from her charms to say that she was not faultless.' People remembered best 'the inexpressible air of sweetness that reigned in her countenance.'

[1] Miss Moffat's *Queen Louisa of Prussia*

It was certainly true of her that the 'Queen's face gave grace.' Many portraits of her were painted, and, as has been said, there are few German homes where her likeness in some form or other is not to be found, loved and venerated. The writer Novalis said every mother should procure a portrait of Queen Louisa for her daughter's room. 'Thus,' he says, 'the young girls will have continually before them a lovely reminder of the ideal whereto they should seek to conform their lives. So shall likeness to the queen become the chief characteristic, the national feature of Prussian women. So shall we see, as it were, one pure and beautiful spirit embodied in a thousand forms.'

Again, he continues, 'In times gone by, it was needful to keep wife and children away from a court as from a place of pestilence. But verily we seem to have been looking on at a miracle of transubstantiation. A court has become a home, a throne and holy place, a royal alliance, a union of hearts. Whoso would perceive the vision of abiding peace, let him journey to Berlin, and behold the face of the queen.'

She was the first Queen of Prussia who made herself acquainted with the life of the country people. She accompanied the king on long and toilsome journeys through all parts of the Prussian territories, leaving behind her in every village and town, a thousand charming memories of the *Landesmutter*, so young, so beautiful, and so kind. In many places the people had never seen a queen before, and they welcomed her and entertained her with a kind of glad simplicity, like children, as she passed among them. They prepared little feasts for her of their best country fare, set temptingly under the trees; they had post horses waiting for her carriage, decorated with ribbons and

Weimar to Auerstädt, was actually almost upon the very field of battle, for French troops were moving in the immediate neighbourhood. The Duke of Brunswick persuaded her to turn back, and sent a squadron to escort her to Weimar. Here she spent the night, as the guest of the Duchess Louisa. An urgent message from camp followed her, advising her immediate return to Berlin. Early next morning she set out with her ladies and a small escort, who guided her by unfrequented mountain-roads, to avoid falling in with stray parties of French soldiers. Mists hung thick round the travellers; the thunder of the cannon told them that the battle was proceeding. 'I journey on between the mountains of hope and the abysses of despair,' the queen said, as her carriage crawled along the steep hillsides. Alas! that evening Weimar was full of fugitives. On the field of Jena, Napoleon's strategy had won another brilliant victory. The Prussian army was broken and scattered, and the castle which Queen Louisa had so lately quitted, had perforce to receive the French Emperor as a guest the very next night. The brave Duchess behaved with such dignity and tact that she made a good impression on her alarming visitor. He was disappointed, as reports came in, that his scouting parties had failed to take the Queen of Prussia. 'It would have been well done,' he said, 'for she has caused the war.' It seems to us she would have been a very embarrassing prisoner, but Napoleon's unchivalrous nature would have delighted in humiliating her. We may be thankful that Queen Louisa was spared this. Seldom have such greatness and such meanness been united in one man.

She meanwhile, with her little company of dejected women, was pursuing her way towards Berlin, torn with

anxiety, and without any definite news beyond the flying reports of the terrified country-people. Three days passed before a courier reached her from one of the generals. 'The king lives,—the battle is lost,' the message said: it was short, but it told enough. The prospect was dark indeed, but Queen Louisa did not fail. With a courageous word to her ladies to bear themselves bravely before the people of Berlin, she pushed on. She knew that she would have to keep hope alive, not only in her own heart, but in the king's. When she reached the capital, she found the news had arrived before her. The people gathered round the palace, begging to see the queen, to hear from herself what had happened: they, too, had learnt, like the king, to depend on her to cheer and console them in trouble. But she might not stay for more than a few hours' rest. Her children had been hurried away for safety. It was rumoured that the French were marching on the city. Early next morning she was again on the road, travelling eastward, and a week later, Napoleon was in Berlin.

Now appeared those disgraceful 'bulletins' inspired by Napoleon, which were published in succession, describing the war as one of the queen's making, and casting shameful aspersions upon her private character and honour. 'Was it not enough for Napoleon to deprive the king of his dominions, that he must also seek to sully the reputation of his wife?' so Louisa exclaimed in bitterness of soul, when she heard what the world was bidden think of her.

She had indeed much to bear, and she had to bear it almost alone. The king had sent for her to join him at Cüstrin, where he had retreated after the battle of Jena. He was depressed and irritable, making no

effort to conceal his regrets at having gone to war. Yet all the time he instinctively depended upon his wife's sympathy and courage. The royal children had been sent to Danzig for safety, under the care of Countess Voss. Louisa's sons never forgot the hour when their mother came weeping to tell them of the misfortunes of their country. 'The king was mistaken about the strength of his army and the skill of its leaders; and so we have been beaten, and must save ourselves by flight. . . . There is now no Prussian army, no national glory. Oh my sons, you are old enough to understand something of the greatness of the calamity that has overtaken us! . . . At some future time, when perhaps your mother is no longer with you, call to mind this solemn hour, and how I wept for the humiliation of my Fatherland.' Her boys cried with her,—'but you must not be satisfied with tears,' she said. 'You must work hard, and grow strong in every way. Then perhaps Prussia's guardian genius will stand by you, and you will be enabled to free your people from insult, and shame, and reproach. You will become worthy of the name of princes, and of the race of Frederick the Great.' In 1870, in the mausoleum of Charlottenburg, William of Prussia, before leaving Berlin to join his soldiers, renewed at his mother's tomb the vow he had taken in his boyhood under the influence of her words and her tears.

Flight and disaster complete the story of the year 1806 From Cüstrin to Graudenz, then to Ortelsburg, the king and queen, with their immediate attendants and officials, were hurried. It was winter, and their accommodation was of the meanest. At Ortelsburg, one room in a poor cottage had to serve as bedroom, dining-room, and sitting-room for their Majesties. The

king used to go for a walk in the morning, while the room was being prepared for breakfast. Food and water were both bad. Yet these privations could have been more easily endured but for the mounting tale of losses, as one Prussian fortress after another was taken, or surrendered to the French. Cüstrin was given up so tamely that it was said the wife of the governor in contempt flung her husband's night-cap at him when he asked for his helmet and dagger, as he was busily arraying himself to meet the French commander.

At Königsberg, one of the little princes fell ill of typhoid fever; his mother flew to nurse him, and caught the illness herself. The king in despair realised that there might be greater sorrows in store for him. The French, too, were advancing—what was to be done? The children were sent on to Memel, that bleak town on the Baltic shore, furthest north in Prussian territory. Louisa refused to remain behind. 'I choose to fall into the hands of God rather than into the hands of *that man*.' They wrapped the sick queen in blankets, and put her into an invalid coach, extemporised as they best could. In the frozen northern mid-winter, over sheets of ice and snow, sometimes within reach almost of the roaring sea-waves, she travelled thus for a hundred and fifty miles. In the cold purity of the air her health improved, to the surprise of her attendants, who thought she would have died of the hardships on the way. Her shelter one night was in a cottage, with a broken window, through which the snowflakes drifted on her bed.

For a whole year Memel remained the headquarters of the Prussian king. Negotiations were going on with Napoleon over terms of peace. There were two parties,

and two alternatives: was the King of Prussia to accept Napoleon's terms, and become his ally (and vassal)? or was he to maintain the compact with Russia, and continue resistance? The latter and (as it seemed to Queen Louisa) the more honourable course was chosen. The Czar crossed his frontier to pay a visit at Memel. At Kydullen, where he had invited the King and Queen of Prussia to accompany him, a review was held, and, in presence of cheering troops, Alexander exchanged the warmest greetings with the Prussian monarch. 'This much is certain,' he said, 'we will not fall singly. If we must go down, we will go down together.'

Louisa wrote hopefully to her father of the turn events had taken. 'God be thanked that once again we have to do with men animated by a sense of honour and a sense of duty. . . . As long as we were suffering the unavoidable consequences of a military reverse, I did not lose heart. It was not the first battle that had been lost, and we could hope to retrieve our misfortune. But when we were called upon to contend with the depravity of men, then, I must confess, I was in despair, for there seemed no one whom I could trust. But enough of bygone evils. Let us look upward to Him who has the ordering of our ways, and who will never forsake us if we do not forsake Him. How deeply I was touched by your remembrance of the 10th of March (her birthday). I kiss your hands for all your goodness.'

She refers in this letter to the brave defence of Graudenz. The French called upon the Commandant Von Courbière to resign the place into their hands, as the King of Prussia had ceased to reign. 'Then *I* am King of Graudenz,' he replied, 'and I do not intend to surrender.'

But alas! a few months later the queen, writing again, had to tell that Bennigsen, the Russian general, had been defeated by the French, and that she would probably have to cross the frontier into Russia with her children. Yet she writes bravely, in reply to her father's affectionate messages,—'when one is so much loved as I am, it is impossible to be utterly downcast, even though another overwhelming misfortune has befallen us, and we are on the eve of leaving the country, it may be for ever. What this means to me you cannot imagine. But I beseech you not to misapprehend your daughter. Never think of me as a poor-spirited thing going about hanging her head. The power to rise above my troubles I derive from two sources: first, the belief that we are not the sport of Fate, but beings upheld and guided by the hand of God; second, the conviction that there is nothing dishonourable about our final overthrow. In no single particular could the king have acted otherwise than he has done, without proving untrue to himself and a traitor to his people. How comforting this reflection is to me, those only can understand whose love of honour is a ruling passion.'

The most dramatic moment in Queen Louisa's life was now approaching, when, with supreme self-control and sacrifice of her own feelings, she was to meet Napoleon face to face, and plead with him for Prussia. A meeting had been arranged between the victorious Emperor, the Czar, and King Frederick William at Tilsit, which was declared neutral ground for the time being. Alexander was pledged to use what influence he could in gaining honourable terms of peace for the King of Prussia, who had continued the war in his support. But Frederick William wrote

almost in panic to his queen, when he heard of the proposed interview. 'I shudder to think of it, yet I see clearly that it will be unavoidable. What is more, you will remember that I always said it would come to this.'

This was ungenerous on the king's part, and yet it is easy to see, from the correspondence, how he relies on his wife's judgment, how it relieves him to unburden himself fully to her of all that has happened, and of all his hopes and fears. He was lodged in the village schoolhouse at Picktupöhnen, opposite Tilsit. The bridge at Tilsit had been burnt down; where it had stood, a raft had been constructed in the river, and on this a pavilion was erected, where the Czar and Napoleon first met alone. Spectators, eager and curious, looked on from the banks of the Niemen, though rain was falling heavily. The King of Prussia, dignified but forlorn, wrapped himself in a riding-cloak and rode up and down the river-bank, waiting for what might develop. Napoleon's exorbitant demands on Prussia included the ceding of three fortresses, to be garrisoned by French soldiers. The claim on Magdeburg was specially resented by the Prussians, as it defended the capital.

Queen Louisa, with her usual clearness of view, wrote adjuring her husband that whatever sacrifice of territory he had to make to Napoleon, he must maintain his independence in what was left to him, and that he must not dismiss a counsellor like Hardenberg at the bidding of 'the tyrant.' She implores the king to make up his mind, and to be firm. He is to plead his own cause, and not depend wholly on the Czar:—'You speak very well when you are prepared beforehand,' she says, rather naïvely. In writing afterwards

to her brother George of her experiences at Tilset, she says, 'it is vastly easier to speak for oneself than to represent two people'; for herself, she could 'get along fairly well, but there was always the king's point of view to be considered. What that poor man suffered baffles description.'

Frederick certainly spared his wife nothing in the letters he wrote her describing his unsatisfactory interviews with Napoleon, who was ungenerous, discourteous, and unyielding. The king met him with cold, helpless pride. The Czar had got so entangled in the course of the negotiations, that he found himself, in the new rôle of Napoleon's friend, powerless to help Prussia. Apparently it was he who first thought of bringing Queen Louisa into the conference, perhaps by way of covering his own want of success. At any rate a hint seems to have been dropped; Napoleon's agent assured his Prussian 'colleague,' that the presence of Queen Louisa would be welcome to his master; and in the end the queen came—not without doubt and anxiety, and pride hardly trampled underfoot. She had plainly little hope of succeeding where the king and the Czar had already failed, but she said, 'If any mortal believed that by taking this step I could save one solitary village for the Fatherland, that alone would determine me to go.'

She left Memel early in the summer morning (July 4th), and drove to Tilsit accompanied by two of her ladies; the ever-faithful Countess Voss was one. As the sun was setting she drove into Picktupöhnen; she was to stay at the Pfarrhaus, probably the best house in the place. Conferences with Hardenberg and the Czar prepared her for what was to come. She already knew the king's mind. Napoleon paid her the

usual official courtesies, and announced that he would wait upon her in person when she arrived at headquarters next day. 'Meanwhile every one seems to have done his best to unnerve her for the coming interview. On the one hand, she was told that she was the last hope of the nation, on the other, that it was a sad thing to see her there. She had reason to know that good advice is cheap. It was so plentifully bestowed upon her that her patience gave way, and she exclaimed, "I wish you would all be quiet, and leave me to rest and collect my thoughts."' [1]

Next day the queen was ferried over the river, and she made her entrance into Tilsit in the presence of crowds of spectators. Her ladies had dressed her with care; they noted with pride how the excitement of the moment had brought back all her sparkling youthful beauty. She wore a white robe embroidered with silver, and as she moved in the gleaming sunshine, she seemed to the dazzled onlookers a being of unearthly radiance, like Goethe's vision of her in the year of her betrothal. Shortly after she arrived at the miller's house in Tilsit where the king had his apartments, Napoleon appeared accompanied by his marshals. Frederick William and his queen received their visitors with a dignity that turned the miller's house into a palace; the king, with his officers, greeted the emperor as he arrived; Queen Louisa met him at the top of the narrow stairway, with a conventional expression of regret at its inconvenience. Napoleon, who had evidently been looking forward to the interview with a sort of cruel curiosity, was visibly impressed by the dignified and beautiful woman before him, and as they talked, his manner became more friendly. The queen

[1] Miss Moffat's *Queen Louisa of Prussia.*

brought the conversation round to the terms of peace. Napoleon interrupted her with frivolous remarks about her dress. 'Must we talk of chiffons at a moment like this!' she said reproachfully. Moved by her earnestness, he asked her to explain clearly what her wishes were, and listened quietly. But he would commit himself to nothing. 'I will think over what you have said. We will see about it,' he replied, when she urged him to spare the territories of Prussia west of the Elbe, which included Magdeburg. Unluckily, at the moment when the victor's mood seemed to be softening, King Frederick William joined the conference, and the dawning opportunity was lost. Napoleon congratulated himself afterwards that the king came in when he did. 'If he had left me with the queen for another quarter of an hour, I would have promised her anything she asked,' he said.

Queen Louisa was not dissatisfied. She felt that she had made at least a temporary impression, and the friends of Prussia were hopeful. In the evening the king and queen were the guests of the Emperor at dinner, along with the Czar. The three monarchs had already shared gloomy meals together, but on this occasion the tact and charm of Queen Louisa gave some brightness to the feast.

But next day all hopes were dashed to the ground, for Napoleon told the Prussian agents roughly that a few words of politeness to the queen meant nothing, and the treaty—which left Frederick William only the mutilated remains of a kingdom, burdened with a huge war indemnity—must be signed at once as it stood.

Such news made it hard for Queen Louisa to appear a second time as a guest at the Emperor's table, but she dared not offend him by refusing to come. Pro-

bably her self-command was greater than his, for Countess Voss in her diary tells how Napoleon 'received her mistress with a countenance in which embarrassment and maliciousness were struggling for the mastery.' The situation was too strained to admit of any pretence at gaiety, and the meal passed almost in silence. When the Emperor and his guests had risen from table, Queen Louisa walked to an open window and stood there alone. Napoleon followed her, —perhaps he had had one illuminating glimpse of his unchivalrous position; he began to make some formal regrets at being unable to yield to her wishes, but her look checked him. A rose-plant was growing near the window; he turned and, breaking off a rose, offered it to the queen; Louisa would not let the opportunity pass of making one more effort for her country. 'At least, with Magdeburg,' she pleaded, as she put out her hand. 'Your Majesty has forgotten,' Napoleon said coolly, 'that it is for me to offer and for you to receive.' 'Your rose is too thorny for me,' she replied, and no more was said. When they parted, an inscrutable smile played upon Napoleon's masked face; but after this, though he still considered the Queen of Prussia his enemy, he spoke of her with respect.

The king and queen returned to Memel. Perhaps the weeks that followed were the darkest in Louisa's life. Her husband was a prey to melancholy, and talked of abdication. Hope seemed crushed for ever. Her vitality, too, was lowered by the damp and cold of the northern climate, and by the privations which the royal family shared with their people. She loved warmth and sunshine, such as she had been accustomed to in South Germany. Berlin she had found trying enough in winter, for she had often complained

of the cold in the great palace rooms—but Memel almost killed her; the rain, the cold, the tardy, fitful summer and niggardly autumn, when the fruit hung harsh and unripened on the trees, all helped to depress her, for she was very sensitive to outward influences. She wrote to her brother and sister, 'When I think of your happiness in seeing one another, of being able to speak freely one to another, I realise that there is still something in this world which can give me pleasure, —and from pleasure I have long been estranged. Tears, the shadow of a great sorrow, even at times despair,—these have been my daily portion. . . . Pray for me. I need it sorely. My heart is dead.'

Yet hope revived, and in the short span of life which remained to her, Queen Louisa toiled to lay the foundation of the new and greater kingdom of which she had got a glimpse, with almost prophetic vision. A band of patriotic, far-sighted men set themselves to the work of reform and reconstruction. Chief of them was Stein, the great political minister. 'We started,' he says, 'from the fundamental idea of rousing a moral, religious, and patriotic spirit in the nation.' Scharnhorst remodelled the army. The *Tugendbund* or 'League of Virtue' was formed, and, as in every other movement which [illegible] German sentiment, Queen Louisa became its symbol and guiding-star.

She was now at Königsberg, where, in the grimy old castle, her youngest daughter, the little Louisa, was born. Few luxuries surrounded this royal infant, for the poor queen's wardrobe had become so diminished through lending to others of her household, that she was almost in rags. It was the king's wish that the child should bear her mother's name, but no royal sponsors were sought for her. 'We still have the love

of the people,' Queen Louisa said,—'let them be her godfathers and godmothers.' Accordingly, representatives of the Estates of Prussia were invited to attend the royal christening as sponsors on behalf of the nation.

Peace and hope came back to the queen as she sat among the flowers in Hippel's garden at the Hufen, a little modest cottage-place in the suburbs of Königsberg, where she removed with her baby for quiet and sunshine. Here she read grave books, and wrote those eager, wise letters, which make us see how her impulsive nature had grown in depth and insight. Her children came every day from the town to see her, and her boys never forgot how she treasured the bouquets of blue cornflowers they gathered for her.[1] The flowers and their colour had a special significance for her, as emblems of some greatly desired thing, remote and magical, like the Blue Bird of Happiness in the fairy-tale. How much her romantic nature had longed after that had eluded her! Among all her troubles, as she said herself, she had sometimes brighter days. 'My chief happiness is wholly independent of other people. It proceeds from within. But gladness also comes to me from without, especially from the friendship of the king, from his confidence in me, and his love towards me. This is a source of great happiness. It is the crowning of our fourteen years of married life.'

In a letter to her father, Queen Louisa shows how wisely she had pondered over the political situation. She saw more clearly than most statesmen of her time on what an unstable foundation Napoleon's power was

[1] In later days one remembers the pleasure with which the old Emperor William used to receive bouquets of his mother's favourite flower from enthusiastic schoolgirls.

built up: 'Day by day I see more clearly that what has befallen us was inevitable. God is manifestly bringing about a great change in the governance of the world. There is to be a new order of things because the old order had survived its purpose, and, having but a semblance of life, it almost fell to pieces of itself. As for Prussia, she had gone to sleep on the laurels of Frederick the Great, regardless of the fact that just because he was master of his century, he was also the harbinger of a new age. As we did not move with the times, we have been out-distanced by them. No one realises this now more clearly than the king. I have just had a long talk with him. More than once he repeated, as if to himself, "things must be very different with us in future." But plans nobly conceived and carefully thought out are often brought to confusion. The French Emperor certainly surpasses us in long-headedness and subtlety. Even when the Russians and Prussians fought like lions and came off victorious, it was they who abandoned the field, and the enemy who remained in possession. We would be all the better for taking lessons from Napoleon. Then what we have suffered at his hands would not be unmitigated loss. It would be blasphemy to say "The Lord is with him." But he is, beyond all question, an instrument in the hand of the Almighty for doing away with meaningless institutions which had come to be mere excrescences on the visible order of things.

'A brighter day will dawn. We cannot put our trust in a perfect Being and despair of that. But good can never be the outcome of evil. Therefore I do not believe that the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte is firmly and immovably seated on that splendid throne of his. Stability proceeds from truth and justice. He

is all for expediency and worldly wisdom. His goings are not ordered in accordance with the eternal laws. He is guided by the circumstances of the moment. Because of this his rule is stained by acts of injustice. He has no thought of furthering noble ends or benefiting his fellow-men. His insatiable ambition prevents him from seeing beyond himself and his personal interests. Many will admire him, but few will have any affection for him. He is dazzled by his past good fortune, and fancies that everything is possible to him. That is to say, he has ceased to exercise moderation: and the man who cannot hold a medium course is sure to lose his balance and come to the ground. I believe firmly in God, and in the moral order of the universe. And since there is no moral order in a reign of brute force, I am hopeful that the gloomy present will be succeeded by a brighter future. This is likewise the hope, the wish, the expectation of the nobler natures amongst us. We must not suffer ourselves to be led astray by those who chant the praises of the present epoch and of their great hero who dominates it. We cannot recall all that has happened, all that is still happening, and say "these are the last, best things." They are but the means of clearing the way for the attainment of some great end hidden as yet in the far distance. It may be that we shall die before it is revealed. God's will be done; in everything His will be done. Meantime I derive confidence and strength and courage and cheerfulness from this hope which I cherish deep down in my heart. How transitory are the things of this world after all! For us they will soon be over. Only let us give heed that we are ripening in all goodness as the swift days pass.

'This, dear father, is my political confession of faith, in so far as I can think things out and piece them together in my woman's way. Insufficient it may be, yet it serves my turn. Forgive me for troubling you with my opinions.'

This letter gives proof, if proof were needed, of the mental and spiritual powers which, combined with rare personal charm, have given Louisa her unique place among the queens of history. At a time when all Europe was panic-struck before Napoleon, raging with fear and hate, or helplessly fascinated by his genius, she neither dreads him, nor reviles him, but looks beyond him to those ultimate laws which, she perceives, govern the affairs of men.

At last the way was open for the return of the Prussian royal family to Berlin. Queen Louisa left Königsberg in December 1809, on the very anniversary of the day she had set out from Darmstadt to enter Berlin as a bride, sixteen years before. She must have been glad to say farewell to the grim old castle with its associations of cold and want, its rats and its French spies. She wrote her brother George that she was overjoyed at the thought of return, yet gloomy forebodings oppressed her. Berlin welcomed her with sound and fury of ringing bells and firing cannon. Impoverished though the town was, the affection of the citizens provided a gift for the queen, a great state-coach, lined with lavender-colour velvet. She used it for her public entry of the city: the people crowded round the carriage, and saw with grief how worn and fragile their beloved Louisa looked. Countess Voss, on the seat opposite, a woman of eighty, looked strong and vigorous by comparison. The queen was not yet thirty-four.

Many anxieties pursued her after her return to the capital, but at last, in June, it seemed possible for her to snatch a respite, and accomplish a long-deferred visit to her father and grandmother in Mecklenburg, where Prince Charles was now reigning duke. The cares and dignities of state seemed to drop from her, as she bursts out once more into delightful girlish gaiety: 'When I think of being with you for eight whole days in Mecklenburg, especially when I think of seeing my good grandmamma, I feel so uplifted that I get quite frightened about it. Positively I have to *skimp* myself in the matter of happiness, because so often when I have indulged in delightsome expectations, everything has gone awry. Of late this has happened with terrible frequency.' She goes on picturing and planning the journey and the meeting, and ends on a top note of high spirits: 'Hallelujah! It is warm and breezy, and the inside of my head is like a peep-show. All the windows illuminated and hung with yellow, red, and blue curtains!! Huzza! dear comrades. Adieu! Now I must write sensibly to grandmamma.' It is as if she had dipped back into her childhood for an hour.

Yet Countess Voss was troubled at the sudden depression which fell on her as they crossed the Prussian boundary into her father's domain; she even seemed reluctant to proceed. But all was forgotten in joyful greetings from father, brother, and sister, who had come to meet her and escort her to Strelitz. There her grandmother was waiting to welcome her. There was a special bond of intimacy between Louisa and her brother George. He was devoted to her: 'What a Catholic finds in his patron saint, that I find in her,' he said. No other woman was to be compared to her. Three days later, the king her husband came, and she

spent the day in showing him all the treasures of the castle. She was very much of a stranger herself to the place, but she delighted in finding herself within the intimate, affectionate family-circle of the old Darmstadt days. When she was alone for a few minutes, she took a pen and wrote: 'My dear father, I am very happy to-day as your daughter and the wife of the best of husbands.—Louisa. Neu Strelitz, 28th June, 1810.' It was a little, last, pathetic sip of happiness from the mingled cup of life, which had held more bitter than sweet for her these later years. Afterwards, when the line she had written was found and carried to her father, she was already gone. A chill, with fever, at first did not seem serious, but her constitution had been weakened by the sorrows and exhausting experiences of the last few years, and after a fortnight's illness, her condition became alarming. Her husband and the two boys, Fritz and William, came in haste and dread anticipation from Berlin through the night. 'If she were not *mine*, she might recover!' the poor king said bitterly, and prayed that if she died, he might be taken too. 'I do not think it can be God's will to part us,' he said, as he knelt beside her bed and kissed her hand, —'You are my only source of happiness. Apart from you, life has no attraction for me. You are the only friend I have, the only being whom I can treat without reserve.' It was only too true. King Frederick William's solitary nature had leant upon her always, and—as her biographers have pointed out—there was something almost maternal in her relations to him. She was brave, and hoped for life almost to the last. On the 19th of July she died. Countess Voss wrote in her diary, 'God's ways are unsearchable and holy, but often they are very terrible. The king, his children,

the state, the court, everybody in fact, has lost everything in losing her.'

This was not the flattery of a court lady, but a bare statement of the feeling at the time, for a volume might be filled with tributes to Queen Louisa, written by people of every condition. Her most enduring tribute remains in the hearts of the German people. Her body lies in the mausoleum at Charlottenburg, where her effigy may be seen, a beautiful sleeping figure, with the Prussian eagle at her feet. When the War of Liberation began, when the women brought their wedding-rings and gold ornaments to be melted for the war-chest, and proudly wore the iron substitutes with their legend 'Ich gab Gold für Eisen,' when blood was poured out like water for the Fatherland, it was the fair memory and example of Queen Louisa that pointed the way to freedom—the way of self-conquest, and effort, and sacrifice.

## SARAH SIDDONS

'Good people, let me pass; I am Sarah Siddons.' The lady who could quell a raging London mob with the tone of her voice and the glance of her eye, so that, on hearing these words, they fell back to make way for her sedan-chair more respectfully than they would have done for royalty itself, still dominates the imagination of a later day. As the procession of history passes, we also gaze with reverence at that serious, majestic figure. 'I am Sarah Siddons,' she says. It is enough, and all heads are uncovered.

She was born in the year 1755, at Brecon in Wales, to share the uncertain, piteous fortunes of a strolling player's life. Her father was Roger Kemble, manager of a little company of actors that toured through Staffordshire, Gloucestershire, and Warwickshire. He had married Sally Ward, daughter of Mr. John Ward, an Irish actor of some standing. Mrs. Kemble was fine-looking, with a stately manner and dignified utterance. Her children, who afterwards became so famous, seem to have inherited these traits from her. She made her husband's acquaintance through his joining her father's company of travelling actors at Birmingham, and she was no stranger to the hardships of a player's life. In spite of its glittering attractions and rewards, it is still a hard life, but in those days it was accompanied by many miseries and degradations, chiefly

owing to the fact that these wandering performers had no status in the eyes of the law. They were 'vagabonds' (an innocent word that has earned disreputable association), and they existed only on sufferance, for they were at the mercy of the ill will or the scruples of every Justice of the Peace, and they were often harried from one parish or town to another, without money to buy food and shelter. They practised their art as they best could, wherever they could gather an audience, sometimes in barns, or, in earlier times, in the courtyards of the great old inns, when the guests would gather in the gallery that ran round the yard, and amuse themselves with looking on at the show. The gifted family of Roger Kemble and his wife were destined, by their genius, and the great qualities of their industry and their ambition, to elevate the life and the profession of an actor in the eyes of all men.

When Sarah, the eldest of the family, was born, two years after the parents' marriage, they were at Brecon (or Brecknock) in Wales, where Kemble was giving performances with his father-in-law's company, of which he was now manager. The inn in which Mrs. Kemble was staying was an old house, picturesque with gables and wood-work, with its sign—the *Shoulder of Mutton*—hanging over the door. It was much frequented by Welsh farmers and drovers, and no doubt the infant's health was drunk with much cheerfulness between these worthy countrymen and the genial actor-father. Roger Kemble was a Roman Catholic; his wife was a Protestant, and by mutual agreement, the boys born of the marriage were to be educated as Catholics, the girls as Protestants. Sarah was the eldest of twelve children, of whom eight grew up, and all even-

tually went on the stage, some with marked success. The two eldest were destined for greatness. John Philip was born two years after Sarah, and though his great talents are held to fall short of her genius, he came to rule the theatrical world as undisputed king. But many years of poverty and makeshift for the parents, of hard work and stern discipline for the children, lay between this and that.

Even if we had been told nothing of Mrs. Kemble's character, we should judge her to have been a woman of great force and determination, to have brought up her large family as she did, upright and honourable, and of tireless industry, strong in the puritan virtues of duty, obedience, and self-control. (Only *one* unhappy daughter afterwards fell away from the lofty standard of her family.) And all this was achieved amid the restless, homeless conditions of their wandering life, as they shifted from town to town, and from village to village on their 'circuit,'—often giving their entertainments by a subterfuge, disposing of their tickets under pretext of a sale of tooth-powder or something of the kind. When Mrs. Siddons had become known all the world over, an old resident in Warwick 'recalled as one of the sights of his boyhood in the town, the daily procession of old Roger Kemble's company, advertising and giving a foretaste of the evening's entertainment. A little girl, the future Queen of Tragedy, marched with them in white and spangles, her train held by a handsome boy in black velvet, John Philip Kemble.' Yet these children, who were strangers to the fireside peace and shelter of a home, grew up with a very strong sense of family ties and obligations.

Sarah was well educated, for her mother took pains

that she should attend good schools in the country-towns where the troupe made temporary headquarters. Special mention is made of a school at Worcester, kept by a Mrs. Harris, where she was a pupil for some time. The other girls were rather cold to her, until at some school-theatricals, she proved herself so knowing and so inventive that she immediately became very popular. Even as a child, what was grave and grand appealed to her; she loved Milton, and knew long passages by heart; doubtless she owed the cultivation of her ear and mind much more to those pursuits of her own than to her perfunctory school-studies. Her natural gifts of elocution were apparent from the first. As a little child, she made her appearance on the stage. She had been announced as an 'Infant Phenomenon,' but when she came on, an uproar in the gallery—a very common incident—upset the attention of the house. Her mother took her by the hand, led her down to the footlights, and bade her recite the fable of *The Boys and the Frogs*. The audience became interested in the pretty, timid child, and peace and good-humour were restored. Such experiences began the training of the future great actress. As she grew older, she took part occasionally in performances with her father and mother. She had lessons in music, and was encouraged in her reading of the poets. It was later than this that she applied herself to the study of Shakespeare with the intense earnestness which was to bear fruit in the splendid interpretations that she gave, in her mature powers, of such characters as Queen Katharine, Constance, and Lady Macbeth.

She was now a girl of sixteen, graceful and beautiful, with great wonderful eyes, fringed with long curling eyelashes. People who saw her when she was an old

woman, admired and remembered those still-beautiful eyes. She was far removed from the popular idea of a 'play-actress,' for there was in her nothing of frivolity or artifice,—nothing, in the strict sense, *alluring*; on the contrary, there was a simplicity and matter-of-factness about her, along with an austere youthful dignity, which grew into the almost overpowering stateliness of her later years; 'a great, simple being' some one called her. The woman in her was as strong as the artist, and strange to say, amid all the vicissitudes of the ever-changing family camp, she had been trained thoroughly in the arts of housekeeping. No wonder that admirers and suitors appeared; among them were squires and persons of substance, who were willing to lay their lands and rents at her feet; they must have thought, with the hero of the Scotch song, when the lady said No, that 'she was daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen.' These worthy country gentlemen had been forestalled by a young actor named Siddons, who had joined the Kembles' company. He was good-looking and versatile—as it seems he could play harlequin or Hamlet; she had been thrown much into his society by the circumstances of their life, and she cared enough for him to persist in her engagement to him until her father and mother withdrew their first opposition to the match. She was married to him at Coventry in 1773. The young husband and wife continued to act together under her father's management. Mr. Siddons is said to have been a good judge of acting, and though his powers were vastly inferior to those of his wife, yet he helped her to improve herself in the parts she was studying—drilling her in them constantly, and 'very cross at any failure.' He had pleasant manners, and in the full, busy years that were

to come, he acted, in modern parlance, as his wife's secretary and agent, and found her business affairs and the negotiations with her managers sufficiently engrossing.

One of her first triumphs came at Cheltenham. The play of *Venice Preserved*, in which she was to act, was announced, and some of the 'persons of quality' who had begun to make Cheltenham fashionable as a watering-place, amused themselves with the prospect of going to make fun of a rustic performance. Cheltenham was then a village of one street, 'through the middle of which ran a clear stream of water, with stepping-stones that served as a bridge,' unsophisticated and rural enough. The jests of the visitors were repeated to Mrs. Siddons, who became miserable at the thought of exposing herself to the ridicule of an unsympathetic audience. The country theatre was graced by the presence of 'the Honourable Miss Boyle, a most accomplished woman,' and other notabilities: the young actress went nervously through her part, and when she heard stifled sounds from the boxes—like suppressed laughter—she was almost overcome with mortification. Next day her husband met one of the party in the street—Lord Ailesbury—who complimented him on his wife's acting, and told him that Miss Boyle and the other ladies were in a state of collapse after their visit to the theatre; they had 'cried themselves sick' under the influence of those marvellous tones. Miss Boyle called on Mrs. Siddons, and this meeting was the beginning of a long and intimate friendship. The 'lady of quality' delighted in putting her wardrobe at the service of her artist friend, and in helping to make theatre costumes for her with her own hands.

This story is an example of that almost inexplicable power which Mrs. Siddons had in exciting melancholy emotion. When, afterwards, she played to crowded houses in London, descriptions of the scenes that arose appear to us now almost like burlesque, and yet they are sober accounts of what took place. Women fainted, or shook and screamed in hysterics; even men gave way to uncontrollable emotion, and the whole assemblage sobbed and cried together. Could *any* acting produce such effects now? We wonder.

The fame of her beauty and her talents began to spread. Garrick, the great actor who controlled the fortunes of Drury Lane Theatre, heard of her, and sent emissaries to see her act. One of them was the Rev. Mr. Bate, 'a bruising, muscular clergyman of the old school,' and also a theatrical critic of experience. He wrote to Garrick, giving a report of his visit to Cheltenham, where he arrived safe 'after combatting the various difficulties of one of the cussidest cross-roads in the kingdom, and saw the theatrical heroine of that place in the character of Rosalind.' This was afterwards not considered one of her successful parts, but Mr. Bate admired her exceedingly; though he saw her 'under almost every disadvantage, I own she made so strong an impression upon me that I think she cannot fail to be a valuable acquisition to Drury Lane . . . her face is one of the most strikingly beautiful for stage effect that I ever beheld.' The critic was still more charmed with her manners and bearing, and notes with surprise that 'though she has been upon the stage from her cradle . . . she has contracted no strolling habits.' This sensitive, serious-minded, beautiful young creature, devoted to her husband and children, and to the earnest study of her

art, must indeed have been the revelation of a new ideal of character to the theatre-world of her day.

At this time her little son Henry was nearly two years old, and in the following November (1775) her daughter Sarah was born. In the course of the autumn an offer had come from Garrick, following Mr. Bate's recommendation, and Mrs. Siddons was engaged to appear at Drury Lane. This was great promotion for a young country actress, and no doubt the anxiety she felt to rise to the height of her opportunity, did a great deal to undermine her chances of success. With her husband and baby children—the youngest an infant of weeks—she made the toilsome journey to London in the beginning of December, travelling for days over bad roads, the wheels of the heavy coach or waggon jolting over the ruts or sticking fast in the mud every few miles, to the utter weariness of the poor travellers. Her health had been weakened, and we cannot wonder that she was found obviously lacking in physical force when she made her appearance on the boards at Drury Lane. It was Christmas week, 1775; the new player had been advertised; she had already been seen in a sort of pageant (the *Jubilee*) arranged by Garrick. In it she was chosen to represent Venus, with an attendant Cupid, a little boy whom she kept smiling and good-humoured by the promise of sugar-plums as they walked in procession. The other leading ladies were so jealous of the prominent place given her, that they rushed in front and tried to block her, till the watchful courtesy of the manager rescued her from their rudeness. Garrick never failed in polite attentions to the newcomer, though Mrs. Siddons took no pleasure afterwards in any of her recollections of this time.

She was to make her debut as Portia in *The Merchant*

*of Venice.* There was a well-filled house. She found herself, when the time came for her to face those mounting rows of curious, critical faces, giddy with nervousness, and this became only too apparent to her audience. A newspaper report says—'On before us tottered rather than walked a very pretty, delicate, fragile-looking creature, dressed in a most unbecoming manner, in a faded salmon-coloured sack and coat, and uncertain whereabouts to fix either her eyes or her feet. She spoke in broken, tremulous tones, and at the close of each sentence her voice sank into a "horrid whisper" that was almost inaudible. After her first exit, the judgment of the pit was unanimous as to her beauty, but declared her awkward and provincial.' Words of praise were spoken in other papers, but the general impression was that her acting was too self-restrained and cold, and that her voice was not strong enough. Garrick gave her other chances, but none of the parts in which she appeared seem to have been happily chosen for her. Afterwards she blamed Garrick for this—not very justly, as it would appear—but a sort of 'ill-luck' seems to have dogged her during this trial season at Drury Lane. She failed to please the London public, and her engagement was not renewed, to her bitter disappointment, and almost morbid self-abasement. She was to retire to the country, to work and study hard for years, and then, with greatly augmented powers, both mental and physical, she was again to challenge the suffrages of the same critical playgoers, and to dominate them as they have never been dominated by an actress before or since.

The next seven years were years of training and gathered experience. Though at first she spoke bitterly

of her 'blighted prospects,' and of 'the degradation she had suffered in being banished from Drury Lane,' as a matter of fact she was welcomed in all the provincial theatres as a gifted actress of assured position. She no longer had to depend on the chances of 'the circuit,' for managers were glad to offer her engagements in such places as Bath, York, Hereford, and other English towns, where the neighbouring country gentry came for change and entertainment, instead of taking the long, difficult journey to London. Her performances in these places steadily increased her reputation, and the growing taste of the public for tragedy helped her to find expression according to the promptings of her genius. From what she has written herself, we see how earnestly she studied the characters she afterwards interpreted with such power. 'It was my custom to study my characters at night, when all the domestic cares and business of the day were over. On the night preceding that in which I was to appear in this part for the first time, I shut myself up as usual, when all the family were retired, and commenced my study of Lady Macbeth. As the character is very short, I thought I should soon accomplish it. Being then only twenty years of age, I believed, as many others do believe, that little more was necessary than to get the words into my head, for the necessity of discrimination and the development of character, at that time of my life, had scarcely entered into my imagination. But to proceed, I went on with tolerable composure, in the silence of the night (a night I never can forget), till I came to the assassination scene, when the horror of the scene rose to a degree that made it impossible for me to get farther. I snatched up my candle, and hurried out of the room in a paroxysm of terror. My

dress was of silk, and the rustling of it, as I ascended the stairs to go to bed, seemed to my panic-struck fancy like the movement of a spectre pursuing me. At last I reached my chamber, where I found my husband fast asleep. I clapt my candlestick down upon the table, without the power of putting the candle out, and I threw myself on my bed, without daring to stay even to take off my clothes. At peep of day I rose to resume my task; but so little did I know of my part when I appeared in it at night, that my shame and confusion cured me of procrastinating my business for the remainder of my life.'

This wholehearted study is in strange contrast to what was told of Mrs. Pritchard, the noted actress whose 'Lady Macbeth' was held up as a model to Mrs. Siddons herself, though Dr. Johnson growled that she was a 'vulgar idiot,' who thought no more of the play out of which her part was taken, than a shoemaker thinks of the skin out of which he cuts a piece for a pair of shoes! She had never read the whole tragedy of *Macbeth*, though she played the heroine's part. Though Mrs. Siddons' manner in tragedy grew eventually into a convention itself, her acting was founded on nature and intelligence. 'She is all truth and daylight,' another actress (Mrs. Clive) said, on seeing her perform.

She became very well known and popular at Bath, where she appeared for four successive seasons. There she made many acquaintances in the *beau monde*, who admired her for her 'elegance' and discretion; many of them became her friends for life. Her critics said she was too fond of fine people, but it would have been difficult for her to escape such a charge, whether justly founded or not. Perhaps she identified herself so

thoroughly with the lofty personages she often represented, that these others seemed her natural companions. Years afterwards, when she had been 'commanded' to appear at Windsor to entertain the Royal circle, Queen Charlotte remarked with admiration on the correctness of Mrs. Siddons' deportment in the august Presence. When she was told this, she said calmly, 'I was at any rate used to personating queens.' But of these friendships formed at Bath, none was more lasting and affectionate than that between herself and the Whalleys. Dr. Whalley is a complete eighteenth-century figure—a 'gentleman of taste and good income, derived from his own private estates, and the rich stipend of an unwholesome Lincolnshire living, which a kind-hearted bishop had given him on condition he never resided on it.' He lived in a fine house on the Crescent—was an author, a friend of Mrs. Thrale, and a correspondent of Miss Seward, the 'Swan of Lichfield.' Mrs. Siddons' letters to the Whalleys are charming in their affection, as well as in a naturalness and gaiety which she did not show in less intimate circumstances.

The time of her complete triumph was now approaching. In the summer of 1782 the managers of Drury Lane wrote offering her an engagement there. She seems to have hesitated about accepting it, for the memory of her former visit to London was still bitter to her, and indeed continued so all her life. Yet, as she wrote, 'after my former dismissal, it may be imagined this was to me a triumphant moment.' In the end, of course, she went; it would have been a denial of her powers to have refused to go. When she made her farewell at Bath, she brought forward her children—there were three of them now—as the 'three

reasons' which had induced her to forsake her friends and supporters there.

> 'These are the moles that bear me from your side,
> Where I was rooted,—where I could have died.
> Stand forth, ye elves, and plead your mother's cause.'

After this, we do not need to be told that Mrs. Siddons was lacking in a sense of humour! She was often jibed at for putting forward the interests of her family as she did. She was unlike many actresses in being strongly developed on the domestic side, and perhaps she made the mistake of taking the public a little too much into her confidence. At the same time, as a 'servant of the public,' she was forced, all her life, to suffer rough interference with her private affairs, especially in money matters.

The fortunes of Drury Lane had declined since Garrick had gone. With all his brilliance, Sheridan, who had bought the patent rights of the theatre, was too erratic and extravagant to make a good manager. The date fixed for Mrs. Siddons' appearance was the 10th October, 1782. She was in very good health and spirits at this eventful time. She wrote very amusing letters to the Whalleys of her travelling experiences, and the amenities of the stage-coach, where she had the oddest of companions, who joined in the same inevitable quarrel over the opening and shutting of the windows which still pursues the vext traveller. The fortnight she spent in London, preparing and rehearsing, was one of intense anxiety and strain. She was to play *Isabella* in Southerne's *Fatal Marriage*, a part which she had long made her own. She wrote of these days:

'No wonder I was nervous before the *memorable* day on which hung my own fate and that of my little

family. I had quitted Bath, where all my efforts had been successful, and I feared lest a second failure in London might influence the public mind greatly to my prejudice, in the event of my return from Drury Lane, disgraced as I formerly had been.' At rehearsal she was so nervous, that at first she could hardly hear her own voice, but, she says, 'by degrees enthusiasm cheered me into a forgetfulness of my fears.' Her little boy, who had to do his part with her in the play, was so overcome by the 'reality' of her acting, that he cried miserably, believing he was to lose his mother. Her friends and fellow-actors encouraged her with their applause. Yet, only two days before she was due to appear, she was terrified to find herself so hoarse that she could hardly speak; the autumn fog had affected her voice. But the sun shone out brightly, clearing the air, and on the morning of the 10th she was immensely relieved to find her voice quite restored.

She had been well advertised, 'puffed' as they said then, in the newspapers and play bills, and the town was full of curiosity to see and hear her again. Her husband was 'so agitated, he durst not venture near the house,' but her old father was there, full of pride and excitement, as he escorted her to her dressing-room. Their anxiety must have reacted on her; she was in one of her 'desperate tranquillities,' as she dressed in dead silence, to the surprise of her attendants. She was bracing herself for what she calls her 'fiery trial. The awful consciousness that one is the sole object of attention to that immense space, lined as it were with human intellect from top to bottom, and all around, may perhaps be imagined, but can never be described, and can never be forgotten.'

Few women have had an hour of such complete

triumph as was hers that evening. The play was a pathetic one. The whole house—from the fashionable folk with powdered heads and lace and jewels in the boxes to the apprentices and lackeys in the gallery—was subdued and shaken by a storm of genuine emotion. There was a purity and reality in her acting that melted the hearts of her audience. She lived, for the time, in the character she was creating. As she said herself, she depended for her effect on 'nature, and not on feigning.'

She describes her home-coming from the theatre:—

'I reached my own quiet fireside on retiring from the scene of reiterated shouts and plaudits. I was half dead; and my joy and thankfulness were of too solemn and overpowering a nature to admit of words, or even tears. My father, my husband, and myself sat down to a frugal meat supper in a silence uninterrupted except by exclamations of gladness from Mr. Siddons. My father enjoyed his refreshments, but occasionally stopped short, and laying down his knife and fork, lifting up his venerable face, and throwing back his silver hair, gave way to tears of happiness. We soon parted for the night; and, worn out with continually broken rest and laborious exertion, after an hour's introspection (who can conceive the intenseness of that reverie?) fell into a sweet and profound sleep, which lasted to the middle of the next day. I arose alert in mind and body.'

The success of this wonderful evening was fully sustained during the season that followed. Strange stories are told of how the box-office was besieged for tickets—footmen crouching round the doors asleep, waiting to secure places for their mistresses; two old men sat playing chess to beguile the long hours. Sir Walter Scott, at

the famous Theatrical Fund Dinner in Edinburgh, five-and-forty years afterwards, recalled those early scenes of Mrs. Siddons' triumph. 'Those young gentlemen,' he said, 'who have only seen the setting sun of this distinguished performer, beautiful and serene as that was, must give us old fellows, who have seen its rise and its meridian, leave to hold our heads a little higher.'

Amid all the excitement and applause she wrote to her friends the Whalleys, thanking them for their letters—'one line of them' (she said) 'is worth all the acclamations of ten thousand shouting theatres.' Afterwards, perhaps, she hardened a little. What woman could otherwise have lived the life she did—with all the glories and the triumphs of the great place she had achieved, yet the 'servant of the public,' the mark for many a poisoned arrow of jealousy or slander? Even her own sisters, as she said sadly, did not love her so well after she became famous.

Her brother, John Philip Kemble, appeared at Drury Lane this year (1783). He had been educated at the Roman Catholic College at Douai, but his stage-instincts were stronger than the claims of the priesthood, and in 1775 he returned to England, just when his sister had made her first unsuccessful venture at Drury Lane. He had his share of stern experiences among the 'strollers,' but she helped him with introductions to the managers of the country theatres, and now at Drury Lane he began his career as a tragedy-actor. Henceforth the brother and sister were to be closely associated in their public life. Her genius was supported by his great talents in the serious drama which their playing had made the fashion. It is curious to recall the grotesque conventions which, in the absence of scenery and 'accessories,' governed the presentation of tragedy:

'heroic' characters appeared in weird head-dresses of nodding plumes; murderers wore black wigs, and had their faces whitened; a Jew was recognised by his red wig. This tradition lasted till about Garrick's time, and the costumes then worn were often absurdly inappropriate. Garrick, for instance, played Macbeth in the wig and court dress of the period, 'looking like a country squire.' It was not until Drury Lane had been rebuilt, that, partly owing to the greater size of the theatre, 'spectacular' effects were much thought of—little, as most critics think, to the ultimate advantage of English drama.

Ireland and Scotland next saw the great actress. The journey to Ireland was the most serious she had yet undertaken. She was delighted with the mountain-scenery she passed through in Wales, on her way to Holyhead. She writes—'We got very safe to Holyhead, and then I felt as if some great event was going to take place, having never been on the sea. I was awed, but not terrified; feeling myself in the hands of a great and powerful God, "whose mercy is over all His works." The sea was particularly rough; we were lifted mountains high, and sank again as low in an instant. Good God! how tremendous, how wonderful! A pleasing terror took hold on me, which it is impossible to describe, and I never felt the majesty of the Divine Creator so fully before. I was dreadfully sick, and so were my poor sister and her Brereton. Mr. Siddons was pretty well; and here, my dear friend, let me give you a little wholesome advice: allways (you see I have forgot to spell) go to bed the instant you go on board, for by lying horizontally, and keeping very quiet, you cheat the sea of half its influence. We arrived in Dublin the 16th June, half-

past twelve at night. There is not a tavern or a house of any kind in this capital city of a rising kingdom, as they call themselves, that will take a woman in; and, do you know, I was obliged, after being shut up in the Custom-house Officer's room, to have the things examined, which room was more like a dungeon than anything else—after staying here about an hour and a half, I tell you, I was obliged, sick and weary as I was, to wander about the streets on foot (for the coaches and chairs were all gone off the stands) till about two o'clock in the morning, raining, too, as if heaven and earth were coming together. A pretty beginning! thought I, but these people are a thousand years behind us in every respect. At length Mr. Brereton, whose father had provided a bed for him on his arrival, ventured to say he would insist on having a bed for us at the house where he was to sleep. Well, we got to this place, and the lady of the house vouchsafed, after many times telling us that she never took in ladies, to say that we should sleep there that night.'

A pretty beginning indeed! as the poor lady said, and, as it turned out, there was perhaps something in Mrs. Siddons that was antipathetic to the Irish character. Her visit to the Dublin theatre was eagerly looked forward to by the people (from 'the Castle' downwards they were all drinking her health in anticipation), and all the circumstances were propitious, yet she never roused that tumultuous affection which the Irish play-goers poured out on their harum-scarum favourites. No woman was ever less of a Bohemian than the stately Mrs. Siddons, and neither the temperament nor the habits of the Irish appealed to her. In the theatre she was offended by the genial pleasantries flung to her from the pit, when a man would call out,

'Sally, me jewel, how are ye?' or an impromptu dance would be indulged in. Although there was general admiration for her acting, there was little enthusiasm after the first curiosity was satisfied, and she was not sorry to leave Dublin and go on tour with a small company under Mr. Daly, the manager of the Theatre Royal in Smock Alley, where she had been playing.

Her recollections of Dublin were not pleasant. She called the city a sink of filthiness. 'The noisome smells, and the multitude of shocking and most miserable objects made me resolve never to stir out but to my business,' she wrote. 'I like not the people either; they are all ostentation and insincerity, and in their ideas of finery very like the French, but not so cleanly; and they not only speak but think coarsely. This is in confidence; therefore your fingers on your lips, I pray. They are tenacious of their country to a degree of folly that is very laughable, and would call me the blackest of ingrates were they to know my sentiments of them. I have got a thousand pounds among them this summer. I always acknowledge myself obliged to them, but I cannot love them. I know but one among them who can in any degree atone for the barbarism of the rest, who thinks there are other means of expressing esteem besides forcing people to eat and to drink, the doing which to a most offensive degree they call Irish hospitality. I long to be at home, sitting quietly in the little snug parlour, where I had last the pleasure of seeing you. . . . Oh! my dear friend, do the pleasures of life compensate for the pangs? I think not. Some people place the whole happiness of life in the pleasures of imagination, in building castles; for my part, I am not one that builds

very magnificent ones—nay, I don't build any castles, but cottages without end. May the great Disposer of all events but permit me to spend the evening of my toilsome bustling day in a cottage, where I may sometimes have the converse and society which will make me more worthy those imperishable habitations which are prepared for the spirits of just men made perfect!'

She met with much more complete appreciation in Scotland, though in her first appearances in the Edinburgh Theatre Royal, the passionate appeal of her acting seemed to fling itself in vain against the wall of Scottish reserve in her audience. 'Stupid people, stupid people!' she muttered under her breath in the pauses between her speeches. At last the ice melted, and tears, swoons, and hysterical outcries became the fashion. Even one very stolid old gentleman, who had barely grasped which of the characters was Mrs. Siddons, came so far under her influence that he confessed he 'began to feel a commotion.' A commotion there must have been, for doctors were kept busy attending to fainting ladies. Her acting was sometimes felt to be too painful—as Queen Charlotte said she found it, when she had to withdraw her gaze from the stage because it was 'too disagreeable.' Besides these emotional tributes, Mrs. Siddons won the admiration and friendship of all the intellectuals and notables of the Edinburgh of that day. She was by and by to form a personal link with the city, for her son Henry married Miss Murray, and eventually became manager of the Edinburgh Theatre.

From Edinburgh she crossed again to Ireland, where she was received as a distinguished personage by all the great people of the country. The Lord Lieutenant paid her flattering attentions, and she became the

guest of her old friend Miss Boyle, now Mrs. O'Neill of Shane's Castle; here she was entertained with courtly magnificence. She writes with eloquence of the beauty and luxury of the place, the banquets and the bands of musicians—like a scene in an Eastern fairy-tale. But all this state and eminence separated her from the easy-living, happy-go-lucky members of her own profession, as her prudent, foreseeing habits in money-matters contrasted with their spendthrift ways, and, from this time onward, her life was embittered by constant attacks both public and private; she was accused, in the plainest terms, of avarice, and of want of generosity to unfortunate and disabled fellow-actors. Admirers of Mrs. Siddons find these stories no very pleasant reading. The charges made against her were greatly exaggerated, but we cannot deny that she drove hard bargains with her managers after she became famous, and that she spoke and acted like a woman constantly harassed with anxiety for her future. This uncertainty and dread of failing powers is the chief terror that besets the path of the woman-artist who is the bread-winner for her family—as Mrs. Oliphant has made us realise. In Mrs. Siddons the maternal instinct was as strong as her love of her art. She toiled at first to provide for her children; then her pride bade her make herself independent of the caprice of the public, or any weakening of her own powers.

Two more children were born to her, a son, George, in 1785; and in 1794 a daughter, Cecilia, who was the only one of her three girls who survived to be her mother's companion in old age. The unpopularity she suffered—which was so strong that she had been denied a hearing on appearing in London after her second Irish visit—was followed by new and greater achievements.

Her interpretation of *Lady Macbeth* was her greatest piece of work, and the part remains unchangeably associated with her name. We read of her appearance in it again with 'first night' tremors, for her critics had said she was incapable of rendering Shakespeare's grander plays. When she was alone in her dressing-room, according to her habit, absorbed in concentration on the part into which she was throwing herself, she was distracted by Sheridan bursting in upon her to remonstrate and argue with her over the details of the sleep-walking scene, the carrying of the candle, and so on. She persisted in acting it according to her own ideas. 'Arrayed in a cloud of white drapery, she threw an appalling mystery over the part . . . the simple unadorned power of the artist herself *filled the stage*, and by her genius seemed to furnish scenery, dresses, magnificence—everything. It was a real triumph.' One who saw her in this describes the feeling of sickly horror with which he was overcome, as if he had been a sharer in the crime.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was among the interested spectators. He had frequently advised her to attempt this part, and the dress she wore in the sleep-walking scene was designed by him. In the early part of the play she was dressed in a heavy black robe, with a broad border of bright crimson, which ran from her shoulders down to her feet; with this she wore a long white veil. In the third act she appeared again in a black dress, barred with great gold bands, and gold ornaments on her neck and in her hair.

She was once more the object of fresh outbursts of enthusiasm and admiration, which her further interpretations of Shakespeare did not lessen. The only part in which she did not succeed was *Rosalind*, for

which she was by nature unfitted. 'Her Rosalind wanted neither playfulness nor feminine softness, but it was totally without archness—not because she did not properly conceive it; but *how could such a countenance be arch?*' People laughed over the queer incongruous garments in which she acted the part (she hated appearing in masculine attire); but even the admiring Miss Anna Seward, when describing the performance, said that 'her dress was *injudicious*.' She was not made for comedy, and it is as the Queen of Tragedy that her memory sits enthroned. All the great men of her day, Burke, Fox, Gibbon, Dr. Johnson himself, came to see her act, and gave her their homage and their friendship. Sir Joshua Reynolds' great picture of her as *The Tragic Muse* speaks to us to-day of her powers, which words seem vain to describe. In it she is seated in a chair of state, with two figures behind holding the dagger and the bowl. The head is thrown back, the left hand raised, pointing upward: the whole conception is grand and stately. In later life Mrs. Siddons loved to recall these sittings at Sir Joshua's—his compliments to her, his willingness to adopt her suggestions. Finally he inscribed his name on her painted robe, saying that he could not lose the honour of going down to posterity on the hem of her garment.

Her portrait was painted by all the great artists of her time. Lawrence had been her friend from early days, and there is a youthful portrait of her in a black hat and plume, and brown riding-spencer, done by him when she was at Bath. He painted her several times: apparently he had conceived for the family one of those romantic, fateful attachments, which included mother and daughters indiscriminately. He admired the mother, he made love first to one daughter

and then to the other. Both girls died, young and beautiful, of consumption. After her daughters' death, Mrs. Siddons saw no more of him. Yet she remembered him, for she spoke of him once to her brother, Charles Kemble, saying, 'When I die, I wish to be carried to my grave by you and Lawrence.' He passed away before she did.

The portrait of Mrs. Siddons by Gainsborough is well known. It shows her to us in the height of her charm and beauty—the exquisite clearness and delicacy of the complexion enhanced by the narrow black band round the neck, and the black velvet hat with nodding plumes. She is dressed in blue, and wears in the fashion of the time a powdered wig with flowing curls. It is the picture of a Queen of Beauty and Fashion.

Reynolds, she tells us herself, admired her in less *modish* attire. 'He approved very much of my costumes, and of my hair without powder, which at that time was used in great profusion . . . with pomatum, which, well-kneaded together, modelled the fair ladies' tresses into large curls like demi-cannon. My locks were generally braided into a small compass, so as to ascertain the size and shape of my head, which to a painter's eye was, of course, an agreeable departure from the mode.' So artists admire the small, delicate, feminine head of the Hindu woman with its neat, close hair-dressing, in contrast to the European lady's puffs and curls. Sir Joshua liked, too, her short-waisted gowns, rather than 'the long stiff stays and hoop petticoats which were then the fashion, even on the stage.'

To the end of her days she retained a great measure of her beauty, and her manner grew more majestic with the years. In her youth, her tall thin figure and great eyes made her look emaciated and ghostly. 'If Sarah

Kemble could but add flesh to her bones, and if her eyes were as small again, she would be a fine-looking woman one of these days,' some one said of her then. In two or three years this opinion was justified, for as she developed her angles rounded off, her eyes became less prominent; 'and at the age of twenty-four or twenty-five she was in the very prime of her marvellous beauty. She had a singular energy and elasticity of motion. Her head was beautifully set on her shoulders. Her features were fine and expressive, the nose a little long, but counter-balanced by the height of the brow and firmly-modelled chin.' ('There's no end to your nose, madam!' Gainsborough exclaimed, 'with a bad word,' like the old woman in *The Three Bears*, when he was sketching her features for his portrait of her.) 'Her eyebrows were marked, and ran straight across the brow; her eyes positively flamed at times. A fixed pallor overspread her features in later days, which was seldom tinged with colour.'

She had friends in all ranks of society, and was now plagued by the attentions of idle people, whose chief motive in making her acquaintance was curiosity. The lofty reserve in which, unlike most actresses, she wrapped herself, stimulated still further the activity of the lion-hunters of her day. Horace Walpole, who observed her with cool, critical eyes, wrote, 'Mrs. Siddons continues to be the mode, and to be honest and sensible. She declines great dinners, and says the business and cares of her family take her whole time.' Dr. Samuel Johnson was persuaded to go and see her, growling at the futility of all play-actors, 'whom he rated no higher than rope-dancers or ballad-singers.' But he was won to approbation, and when she visited him at Bolt Court he received her with genuine pleasure and

homage. Boswell tells us how when she came into the room, and there was no unoccupied chair to offer her—probably books and papers littered everything—Dr. Johnson with a smile, and the tact of true compliment, said, 'Madam, you who so often occasion a want of seats for other people, will the more readily excuse the want of one yourself.' When seats were found, they talked together, the stately lady in all her bravery of fashion, and the sage in his black worsted stockings and old brown coat, begrimed with snuff, which the Doctor took 'in handfuls.' *That* would not annoy Mrs. Siddons—she took snuff herself, and cherished the recollection of 'the excellent Irish snuff' with which her old friend and manager Wilkinson used to regale her. Dr. Johnson was delighted with her. 'Neither praise nor money, the two powerful corrupters of mankind, seemed to have depraved her,' he said. 'I shall be glad to see her again.' She paid him several visits, when he always treated her with great consideration. His ceremonious 'Dear madam, I am your very humble servant,' spoken with a bow as he held her hand in farewell, was no mere formality, but an utterance of genuine regard. Deaf and half-blind as he was, he promised to 'hobble to the theatre' to see her act Queen Katharine in *Henry VIII.*, but he died before this intention was fulfilled.

Less agreeable to her were the intrusions of mere curiosity, as when five ladies actually forced themselves into her apartments, in spite of the remonstrances of her servant. The leader of the party was 'a tall, elegant, invalid-looking person,' whom, Mrs. Siddons says, 'I did not receive very graciously. A very awkward silence took place. Presently the first lady spoke. "You must think it strange," she said, "to

see a person entirely unknown to you intrude in this manner upon your privacy; but you must know I am in a very delicate state of health, and my physician won't let me go to the theatre to see you, so I am come to look at you here." She accordingly sat down to look, and I to be looked at, for a few painful moments, when she arose and apologised.' We can imagine how painful those moments were, for Mrs. Siddons adds, 'I was in no humour to overlook such insolence, and so let her depart in silence.' She was almost mobbed at evening parties, especially in the houses of 'the Blues,' the learned ladies, who tried to exploit her, as far as they dared, for the entertainment of their circles. People crowded round her when she appeared, standing on chairs and tumbling over each other in their eagerness to get a glimpse of the great actress, while the more venturesome teased her with inquisitive questions about her work, or discussed her playing before her very face. No wonder she felt herself so outraged by these inroads on her privacy that her manner became cold and severe, so that Mrs. Thrale exclaimed, 'Why, this is a leaden goddess we are all worshipping!' But aside from all this senseless adulation, she had many real friends. The amiability shown her by the Royal Family earned her lasting gratitude. When the king and queen came in state to see her act, the description of their rich clothes and of the canopies under which they sat—crimson velvet and gold for the king and queen, blue and silver for the prince and princesses—sound oriental in their magnificence. More homely is the account of the visit of the king and queen to the little theatre at Weymouth, when Mrs. Siddons was there. The Royal party had met her walking on the sands: her stately curtsey is noted, and a special

performance commanded at the theatre. On the day appointed, the king and queen had gone away on an expedition, from which they returned so late, that, not to keep the audience waiting longer, they sent a page home for their wigs, and appeared *sans ceremonie.* She was often summoned to read before the Royal circle, and she gave lessons in elocution to the young princesses. One of her valued possessions was a gold chain, with a jewelled cross attached, which Queen Charlotte gave her as a souvenir of her visit to Windsor, when, after her retirement from the stage, she went 'by command' to read before the court. This surely was the 'badge of honour' to which she refers in her letter to her friend Lady Harcourt, after speaking of this visit, and of her gratification at the pleasure her royal audience had shown in hearing her.

But behind the popularity and the brilliance were other things—incessant work and travelling, for when the London season was over, the great actress set off on provincial tours (an unpopular action with her profession, for it threw local actors into the shade for the rest of the year); then, in spite of her apparent large gains, she was never free of money anxiety, owing to the unpunctuality and carelessness of Sheridan, who was deep in debt to her; heaviest of all, came family bereavement. Her daughter Maria died in 1798, after every effort had been made by care and change of scene to save her life. Five years later, her elder daughter Sarah died, after a comparatively sudden illness. The poor mother was away at the time in Ireland, and her letters are piteous to read, written in uncertainty and anxiety, as she waited for the long, slow posts, for the mails were delayed by storms, and there were no means of crossing. By the time she reached England, her

daughter was dead. Her grief was intense. 'The darling being for whom I mourn is surely released from a life of suffering, and numbered among the just spirits made perfect. But to be separated for ever, in spite of reason, and in spite of religion, is at times too much for me.' She looked with terror at her only remaining daughter Cecilia, 'just returned from school with all the dazzling frightful sort of beauty that irradiated the countenance of Maria, and makes me shudder when I look at her. I feel myself like poor Niobe grasping to her bosom the last and youngest of her children.'

All her toil had been for her children. Once in a moment of weariness she had written: 'I wish they (the rest of the family) would go and enjoy themselves, and leave me the comfort and pleasure of remaining in my own convenient house, and taking care of my baby. . . . I am every day more and more convinced that half the world live for themselves, and the other half for the comfort of the former. At least, this I am sure of, that I have had no will of my own since I can remember; and indeed, to be just, I fancy I should have little delight in such an existence.'

Old Roger Kemble had died this year. Almost worse troubles fell on her in the malignant gossip which pursued her on account of her unwise friendship with the vulgar Galindo couple whom she met in Dublin. The support and esteem of her friends carried her through this 'diabolical business,' as she called it, but not without loss. Mrs. Inchbald, the actress—her own friend and her brother's, charming and kind, but prim—said that she could never admire Mrs. Siddons so much after she had let herself become the dupe of such people as Galindo and his wife.

She had written some time before, 'I must go on *making* to secure the few comforts that I have been able to attain for myself and my family. It is providential for us all that I can do so much. But I hope it is not wrong to say that I am tired, and shall be glad to be at rest indeed. I hope yet to see the day when I can be quiet.'

There were changes of scene in London during these years. The old Drury Lane Theatre had been pulled down and rebuilt on a much larger scale. Critics said that Mrs. Siddons' acting suffered from exaggeration and over-emphasis as a consequence of playing in this 'wilderness,' as she herself described it. Her brother John Philip Kemble became manager, but Sheridan's recklessness so lowered the fortunes of the theatre that in 1802 Mrs. Siddons and her brother severed their connection with Drury Lane; and next season she appeared at Covent Garden under her brother's management. Here she continued to appear in her favourite Shakespearean characters, which remained popular, in spite of rival attractions, some of them trivial enough. The year 1808 was one of misfortune. Her husband died in March; and though perhaps the bond between them had slackened as her powers had developed, yet she felt deeply the breaking of their union. 'I shall feel it more than I shall speak of it. . . . May those to whom I am dear remember me when I am gone as I remember him, forgetting and forgiving all my errors, and recollecting only my quietness of spirit and singleness of heart.' That same year Covent Garden Theatre was burnt to the ground. John Kemble described the losses in his grandiloquent way: 'It is gone with all its treasures of every description; that library, which contained all those immortal

productions of our countrymen; that wardrobe; the scenery. Of all this vast treasure, nothing now remains but the arms of England over the entrance to the theatre, and the Roman eagle standing solitary in the market-place.' With wonderful courage Mrs. Siddons set herself to build up again with her brother the damaged fortunes of the house. She tells us about her wardrobe losses. 'Of all the precious and curious dresses and lace and jewels which I have been collecting for these thirty years—not one, no, not one article, has escaped.' She most regretted her piece of lace that had belonged to Marie Antoinette. It was 'more than four yards long and a yard wide, and never could have been bought for a thousand pounds, but that 's the least regret. It was *so* interesting.' A new and grander Covent Garden was built, but its opening was attended by wild scenes of riot and disorder. The public resented the increased prices which the expenses of rebuilding had made necessary, and they refused a hearing to Mrs. Siddons herself, though in the street they made way for her chair to pass with a reverence they found it impossible to deny her. These O. P. (old prices) riots lasted for weeks, and in the end Kemble gave way, prices were lowered, and the populace were once more friends with 'Black Jack,' as they called him.

In failing health and spirits, but with unconquered will, she toiled on some years longer. In 1812 she retired. Some years before, she had realised her dream of a cottage in the country, in Westbourne Farm, which she had made into a charming home. Her farewell appearance was made in *Macbeth*, before a crowded, sympathetic house, amid deeply emotional scenes. 'I feel as if I were mounting the first steps of a ladder conducting me to another world,' she said with a sigh,

and although almost twenty years of her life were before her, yet a shadow seems to hang over them. The zest and pride of life had withered, and after all those lusty years crowded with effort and applause, a silence and emptiness seem to fall. Though she was cheered by the companionship of many friends, her thoughts turned to the past, and, in her mind, she lived her days over again. 'This is the time I used to be thinking of going to the theatre—first came the pleasure of dressing for my part, and then the pleasure of acting it; but all that is over now.'

The poet Moore, meeting her in her retirement, says he thought her interesting for the first time *off* the stage. She told him she had lost twenty-six friends in the course of the last six years. 'It is something,' he adds, 'to *have had* so many.' American visitors made her acquaintance, among others Washington Irving, who confessed himself solemnised by that grand air which the Queen of Tragedy was unable to lay aside. 'She reminded me of Sir Walter Scott's knights, who

> "carved at the meal with gloves of steel,
> And drank the red wine through the helmet barred."'

But while gracious to personal friends, she detested being made a show of, and another party of Americans who insisted on sharing her company at the poet Campbell's (much to the discomfiture of the host) found her sufficiently alarming. 'She received my apology very coldly, and walked into the house with tragic dignity. At first she kept the gentlemen of the New World at a transatlantic distance; and *they* made the matter worse, as I thought, for a time, by the most extravagant flattery. But my Columbian friends had more address than I supposed, and they told her so many interesting anecdotes

about their native stage, and the enthusiasm of their countrymen regarding herself, that she grew frank and agreeable, and shook hands with both of them at parting.'

In 1817 she left Westbourne Farm, and took a house in Upper Baker Street, looking into the Regent's Park, and here she lived with her daughter Cecilia and Miss 'Patty' Wilkinson, the child of her old York friend. She had become interested in clay-modelling, and she built out a room to use as a studio. She gave readings, too, in the Argyll rooms, which revived memories of her old successes. She appeared, dressed in white, her beautiful head with its coils of dark hair showing against the red screen which made the background. Her book, a large-print quarto, lay on the lighted reading-desk. Her sight was failing—'the little that is left almost washed away by tears,' she had said.

Of her religion little has been mentioned, for in this, too, she was reserved, as in all else, but her intimate letters reveal a strain of deep and true feeling. She was truly English in her dislike for unfamiliar forms, as we see from her comments on the 'fantastic tricks and gabbling prayers' in the churches she visited in France; though she adds, 'I am willing to own that all this may be prejudice, and that *we* may not *mean* better than our neighbours, but *fire* shall not burn my opinion out of me, and so *God mend all*.'

Her seventy-second birthday was celebrated at Cobham Hall, where she was the guest of Lord and Lady Darnley. Music and Shakespeare readings, and a dinner-party of twenty-three people in honour of the day at once gratified and fatigued her.

In the following year she died, on the 8th June 1831, and a week later she was buried in the New Ground

of Paddington Church. Two only of the children for whom she had struggled and sacrificed herself survived her—her younger son George, who was in India, and her daughter Cecilia. The performers from the two great theatres with which she had been connected—Drury Lane and Covent Garden—followed her to the grave. The statue (executed by Chantrey), which stands beside her brother's in Westminster Abbey, was placed there by the actor Macready to the honour of her memory.

This greatest of English actresses was also a typical Englishwoman, strong in the so-called 'puritan' virtues which are so essentially English; single-hearted, faithful, hard-working, and home-loving; entirely without artifice, honest almost to bluntness. When we reflect on the personality of the woman who could unveil the flaming soul of Lady Macbeth, or invest herself in the sorrowing majesty of Queen Katharine, we are once more confronted by the enigma of genius.

## JENNY LIND

THERE is a true fairy-tale echo in the story of the child who lived with her grandmother in the House of Widows, and sang to her cat. She sat at the window and sang, so that people, as they went up and down the busy street, heard her, and wondered that there could be such delicious magic in a child's singing. Then one day the maid of a certain lady passed by and listened to her, and going home told her mistress that she had never heard anything so beautiful as this little girl's singing to her cat. So the ball is set a-rolling, and never stops until, in the complete fairy-tale manner, the king has sent for her and said, 'I appoint you, mademoiselle, to be the chief singer in my royal palace.' The birds of the wild wood have told all their secrets to the little, shy, ugly child, and she grows up a lady of enchantments. Kings and queens beg her to sing to them. Crowds wait upon her footsteps—they crown her with flowers, and fill her lap with gold. And, like the heroines of all the fairy-tales, she was always 'good.' It was indeed this 'goodness'—her simplicity and purity of soul—that remained with people as the lasting impression of Jenny Lind's wonderful singing, so that 'her name was associated with a sort of mysterious reverence.' She was born at Stockholm on October 6th, 1820, and christened the day after her birth, when she received the name of Johanna Maria, but, as she tells us

herself, she was never called by any other name than 'Jenny,' the little homely affectionate name that afterwards fitted so well, with its touch of endearment, her relations with her English admirers and friends.

She is one of those children of genius whose birthright is something infinitely larger than what we can conceive of as inherited from her natural parents. She belonged much less to them than to her native country as a whole. The circumstances of her upbringing helped to emphasise this. Yet, whatever good gifts of taste or temperament they had to bestow, they transmitted to her. Her father, Nilslas Jonas Lind, was certainly musical, though he was not a very efficient bread-winner. He was popular at musical gatherings and merry-makings, where he used to sing the favourite songs of the day, while he joined in easy good-fellowship with all and sundry. He married Anna Maria Fellborg, a woman of faculty and energy, but embittered by early unhappiness. She had divorced her first husband, Captain Radberg, a man of bad character, and her second venture only seemed to add to her cares, for Nilslas Lind proved unable to provide her with a home. She belonged to a worthy burgher family, and was fairly well educated, so she set herself resolutely to maintain herself and her children by teaching. When Jenny was born, Fru Lind was keeping a day-school for girls. Amelia Radberg, her first little daughter, was now a child of about nine. With all her ability and force of character, Fru Lind seems to have shown herself harsh and unloving, and there was little tenderness between mother and child in those early days, though when she grew up, Jenny treated her parents with noble dutifulness. She deeply lamented that her mother was not spared to an old age which she could

'have surrounded with joy and peace and tender care. . . . Now that she is quieter and more reasonable . . . everything was smooth and nice between us.' We may well pity the poor mother, too, so absorbed in the hard struggle for daily bread that she had no time to welcome or care for her baby. The first three years of Jenny's life were spent in the country at Sollentuna, near Stockholm, where her mother placed her in the care of Carl Ferndal and his wife; he was organist and parish-clerk in the church there. Some sense of the charm and beauty of the country-life and country things would seem to have passed into the child even in these infant years. In after life she always gave the impression of being one who had her roots in the peasant life, among the old elemental simplicities. And yet, as we shall see, she was brought up as a child of the theatre; she was familiar with its language, and trod its boards long before she had awakened from the unselfconsciousness of early childhood. Her mother quarrelled (poor Fru Lind was a woman of many quarrels) with Clerk Ferndal, and the baby was brought back to Stockholm. The three-year-old child was quickly aware of a new and affectionate presence in her mother's house. This was her grandmother, Fru Tengmark, who was making a temporary stay with her daughter; she afterwards entered the Home for widows of Stockholm burghers. The unfamiliar sights and sounds of the town came to Jenny with a strange significance; when the soldiers went marching up the streets with sounding bugles, she crept to the old square piano where her mother's pupils had their lessons, and with one childish finger beat out the music she had heard. 'Amelia, is that you?' the grandmother called, thinking the musician must be her

daughter's elder child, who was being taught the piano. Jenny, feeling herself a criminal, hid under the instrument, till the old lady dragged her out. She confessed with tears that she was the unauthorised performer; but, child as she was, she never forgot the strange, deep look her grandmother gave her; something of the wonder and the 'wild surmise' of the discoverer broke upon the old woman's mind. 'God had written within me,' Jenny Lind wrote long afterwards of her musical gift, and some dim guess at this kept Fru Tengmark silent and amazed.

The grandmother had rooms allotted to her in the Widows' House, and the child lived on with her mother for the next three or four years. She had lessons with the other day-pupils; Louise Johanssen, a girl some years older than Jenny, was the only boarder. The two became fast friends, in an intimacy which drew them together in later life. But Fru Lind found difficulties in carrying on her school; she gave it up, and handed Jenny over to the guardianship of the steward of the Widows' Home, where the child's grandmother lived. It seemed an arrangement that suited every one. Jenny was already a familiar and welcome figure in the precincts of this retreat, where she came, dancing and 'singing with every jump of her childish feet,' to visit her grandmother. It was from this good old lady that Jenny received the first impressions of religion which influenced her whole life so strongly. She had no childish playmate,—there was only the cat with a blue ribbon round its neck. But nothing could quench the perpetual ripple of song that poured forth as from some free and happy bird. Such a gift could not be hid, and at last the story reached the ears of Mademoiselle Lundberg, who belonged to the company at the Royal

Opera House. It was her servant who heard the little girl singing to her cat at the open window. The lady was so interested that she found out who the child was, and persuaded her mother to bring her that she might hear her sing. There could be only one conclusion. 'The child is a genius,' she said, but when she added, 'You must have her educated for the stage,' Jenny's mother demurred. Her daughter said afterwards, 'She, like myself, had the greatest horror of all that was connected with the stage.' She consented, however, to take the child to see Herr Croelius, who was Secretary and Singing-Master at the Royal Theatre; Mademoiselle Lundberg gave her a letter of introduction to the Secretary, and off the two went. But poor Fru Lind was troubled with doubts and hesitations. She was taking a step that did not accord with the sedate family traditions of her side of the house; her husband's musical talent had brought little good to his wife and child. Even on the steps of the Opera House she would have turned back, but the child, guided by some sure instinct that told her *this* way lay her path, pulled eagerly at her mother's hand, and they went on. When Croelius heard her sing, we are told he was moved to tears. He took her to Count Pulke, the head of the Royal Theatre, but Jenny in describing the interview afterwards said the count would not even look at her. 'How old is she?' he asked. 'Nine years,' he was told. 'Nine! This is not a crêche! It is the King's Theatre.' She recalls herself in unflattering language as 'a small, ugly, broad-nosed, shy, gauche, undergrown girl!' But Croelius persisted: 'If the count will not hear her, then I will teach her gratuitously myself, and she will one day astonish you!' Count Pulke then consented to hear her, and was in turn so

moved by her singing, that the question of her career was there and then settled.

She was soon afterwards entered as a pupil in the school attached to the Royal Theatre of Stockholm, the directors making themselves responsible for her maintenance and education, with the special purpose of developing and training her musical and dramatic talents. She thus became an apprentice, or rather, in happier phrase, she became the adopted child of the theatre, and her new guardians exercised a complete and benevolent care over all her concerns. For some years she was boarded with her mother, along with other pupils of the theatre school, but the arrangement ended unhappily. Fru Lind treated her charges with such harshness that most of them were removed, and in the end Jenny herself ran away from her mother's house. Yet in spite of these shadows there was much happiness in her youthful years. With hours spent in music, singing and dancing, with the companionship of the other pupils, among whom was her special friend Mina Fundin, this could hardly fail to be the case. The little child with earnest eyes and secret, steadfast nature could break out into light-hearted glee with the best of them. Her genius showed itself from the beginning. Even as a child of ten or eleven she appeared on the stage in the theatre at Stockholm in parts suited to her years, when she astonished every one by the promise of her dramatic powers. It was said afterwards that if she had had no singing voice she would have become one of the greatest of actresses. But Herr Berg, her singing-master, was confident of a great future for her.

So the years pass as she grows in her teens. The public of Stockholm have become familiar with her

appearance in parts of very varied character. When she was seventeen, the directors placed her upon a new footing; hitherto she had acted as a theatre-pupil earning no money for herself, but she was now paid a fixed salary of about £60 a year, with an added bonus for each appearance. While she gained much valuable dramatic experience, she probably overstrained her voice at this perilous time of growth. She sang now for the first time the part of 'Alice' in Meyerbeer's opera *Robert le Diable*, which she was afterwards to make so famous. Immature and partially trained as her voice was then, people who heard her sing the short passage in which 'Alice' appears never forgot the wonderful thrill of it.

Above all, during these years of study and growth, she was learning to know her own powers. She 'realised herself' with a strange suddenness. The day was the 7th March, a day she kept ever afterwards in solemn remembrance as a second birthday, a holy day, when a knowledge of power had come to her, as truly from God as any vision that descended to a praying virgin in a trance. It is said with reverence, for indeed it is the only view that will explain to us the lofty character of this Swedish girl, and her unsurpassed purity and dignity of conduct in her walk through what John Bunyan calls 'the wilderness of this world'—a way, too, which led her right into the heart of Vanity Fair. She had been studying the part of 'Agatha' in *Der Freischütz*, when an impulse came upon her to express herself as never before; her teacher, in tears, awe-struck almost, said, 'My child, I have nothing to teach you; do as nature tells you!' She had the same experience with her audience in the evening. She had often won their applause before, but never with a spell

like this. 'Something happened that night which had never happened before. . . . She learned something of her mission. For, to her religious mind, the discovery of a gift was the discovery of a mission. She saw the responsibility with which she was charged, through the mere possession of such a power over men. The singer, with the gift from God—that is what she became on that night. "I got up, that morning, one creature," she said, "I went to bed another creature. I had found my power!"'[1]

From this day her fame spread in Sweden. The deep, passionate love of country which always possessed her was never chilled nor slighted by lack of appreciation from her native folk. From the days when the Stockholm people praised her delightful, spontaneous, childish acting, throughout all her student years, as her singing gifts became more plainly manifest, the admiration of her fellow townspeople continued to grow. No shadows fell upon her career, except those which the difficulties of her home-life cast upon it. The parents were proud of their child and delighted at her success, and there are pleasant gleams of happy intercourse, as when Jenny spent a holiday with her mother at Gothenburg, and Fru Lind writes to her husband, 'Our Jenny recruits herself daily, now in the haystacks, now on the sea or in the swing, in perfect tranquillity, while the townspeople are said to be longing for her concert, and greatly wondering when it will come off. . . . She captivates all, all! It is a great happiness to be a mother under such conditions. She sends fondest love. . . . About the 20th Jenny will give her first concert—every one says she ought to raise the usual price.'

[1] *Life of Jenny Lind*, Scott-Holland and Rockstro.

The last sentence touches a point where mother and daughter differed constitutionally. And in the end Jenny was obliged to part company with her mother and make a home with other friends, the Lindblads, under whose roof she found the peace and harmony that were so necessary to her. Herr Lindblad was himself famous as a writer of Swedish songs, and his influence helped and stimulated her in her art. Yet she remained a loyal daughter to the unfortunate mother whose violence of temper made her such a difficult companion. In after years she would allow no would-be benefactor the credit of having assisted her childhood. 'My mother provided for me by her own exertions and talents,' she writes in her biographical letter preserved at Stockholm.

She travelled in Sweden and gave concerts at Gothenburg and Upsala. The newspapers had begun to call her the 'Nightingale'—'the famous Jenny Lind, whose arrival many a one has heartily looked forward to. . . . It is a great, an extraordinary talent one admires in her; but how infinitely is the value of this artistic power increased by the unpretending, modest, charming manner in which it presents itself to an enraptured listener. With her all seems Nature, simple and glorious, so as to make one forget what great influence Art has also exercised on her development. It is by this harmonious combination of a noble nature and art that Fröken Jenny Lind in every way stands out as of exceptional and unalloyed worth.' This pronouncement, made in the years of her early successes in her native country remained true of her always.

Her fame as a singer, and still more the impression made by her personal character, opened all doors to her in Stockholm. Her appearance at a distinguished

social gathering is described in her *Life* from the personal recollections of a lady, the daughter of the host, who was present at the party, herself a very young girl at the time. 'On the threshold stands the host, and by his side, shaking hands with him, a young girl, with an abundance of curls round the pale cheeks; a gown in simple style softly clings round the maiden figure, and there is a dreamy, half-absent and fascinating look in the deep-set eyes. The hum is increasing still more when the old nobleman leads the visitor into the midst of his guests; but he has not time to pronounce her name, it is already on everybody's lips, and is now flying round the room with a subdued sound: Jenny Lind! Jenny Lind! The beauties of the season are forgotten, and, what is more, they forget all about themselves. . . . A crowd gathers round the plain-looking young girl, thus for once justly conceding the preference of genius to birth—of beauty of soul to beauty of features. . . . Every one is gratified who catches a word or look from this Jenny Lind, who, for the last few weeks, has, as "Alice" in *Robert le Diable* and "Agatha" in the *Freischütz*, captivated and enchanted both themselves and the whole Stockholm public.'

The young guest was at first reserved and somewhat monosyllabic among so many strangers. Foolish flattery she resented, or openly laughed at. When some gushing admirer asked her what she thought of in the supreme moments of her part as 'Alice,' she said, 'I believe I was thinking of my old bonnet.' But, wherever she encounters genuine and deeper understanding in the compliments uttered, her answers are sympathetic, almost humble.

'The gay party went on, the musical programme was opened by the daughter of the house and her teacher,

after which followed one of Beethoven's most beautiful trios. Jenny Lind sang the "Lieder" of Geijer and Lindblad as they never were, nor ever more will be, sung. . . . The host and hostess were obliged to check the too eager wishes of their friends to hear more and ever more—in order to show that the object of the invitation had been the personal acquaintance of the charming artist, not only the enjoyment of her song, lovely though it be. . . . She was the first operatic singer received in the best society of the capital in which she became a dear and honoured guest.

'In the memory of the writer, Jenny Lind stands out a unique apparition, like no one else, simple, unpretending, but dignified—penetrated by a sort of sacred responsibility for her mission—the mission of Art in its lofty purity, which she felt that God had confided to her.'

It was this sense of *vocation* which placed her apart, beyond fear or flattery; it gave her sometimes a certain aloofness, proof against all inroads of unseemly curiosity. Of her personal appearance she thought not at all, and she is always described as plain on first view. But as she moved and spoke, innumerable charms and graces appeared. Her face, we are told, 'was delightful to watch. It could express everything with a graphic intensity that made one laugh from pure joy. It could brim over with fun: it had an irresistible archness when she was amused: it was capable of an almost awful solemnity: and it could, when she was suspicious and on her guard, become absolutely stony.'[1] Her movements were extremely light and graceful; her walk, the poise and balance of her body, we are told, were 'perfect.' She loved dancing, no recrea-

[1] *Life of Jenny Lind*, Scott-Holland and Rockstro.

tion refreshed or delighted her more. Thus when she was animated, speaking, singing or acting, she became illuminated, transformed—as in Lady Westmorland's description of her afterwards at Berlin: 'I saw a plain girl when I went in, but when she began to sing, her face simply and literally "shone like that of an angel." I never *saw* anything or *heard* anything the least like it.'

In her youth she wore her hair in bunches of curls hanging over her ears; later, it was gathered in drooping wavy masses round the head, low, and knotted behind. Her wide brow and large grey eyes gave a constant serene charm to her face. Once, in a tableau-vivant at a Stockholm party, she represented Carlo Dolce's St. Cecilia: people were struck with her likeness to the picture, and this fancied resemblance gave her real pleasure, though she was a lifelong despiser of her own looks. She always kept among her treasures a little souvenir of the evening and of her part in it as Saint Cecilia. She did not like wearing bright colours, even as a little girl. Her mother and step-sister Amelia had showier tastes; often, as she ran out of the house to school, she would pluck out of her hat the gay feathers or ribbons they had stuck there. She was emphatic in her likes and dislikes—persistent even to stubbornness in any course she adopted.

She had now, as a girl of twenty, achieved what would have been to many an entirely satisfying success. She had won for her art enthusiastic recognition and applause, a sure livelihood by the way, and for herself many friends, among them the best minds in Sweden. The seal of royal approval was set on her when in January 1840 she was appointed court-singer to His Majesty Carl Johann (who had been Napoleon's famous marshal Bernadotte). 'It is a great mark of

distinction,' her mother wrote in high gratification to her husband, 'and a great joy for us!'

But she was too true an artist to rest satisfied, too great a visionary. She saw far in front of her fields of effort and achievement that called to her of what she had yet to learn and to do. Like St. Paul she had to labour as one who must give account. It was afterwards in England that she told Mrs. Stanley, the wife of the Bishop of Norwich, that 'she felt every morning, when she got up, that her voice was a gift from God, and that perhaps that very day might be the last of its use.' Her talent must be put out to further usury. She knew there were capabilities in her voice which had never yet been developed. She would go to Paris and learn from the great master of singing, Manuel Garcia.

To leave Sweden was to her like being torn up by the roots. All her life through she suffered from terrible fits of home sickness, which came upon her with the force of a physical malady. Then it was that she would go to the piano and croon to herself her native Swedish songs to comfort her, or sit alone in a mood that was, as she said herself, 'happy but so melancholy that the tears streamed down her cheeks.' She bade farewell to her friends, 'almost crushed' as Madame Lindblad wrote. 'I never thought it would cost her so much. On the last night she never slept, but wrote letters the whole night through, coming occasionally into our rooms to have a good cry.'

Afterwards Jenny Lind refused to own any one as master. 'God had written within me what I had to study,' she wrote. 'My ideal was (and is) so high, that no mortal was to be found who in the least degree could satisfy my demands; therefore I sing after no one's *methode*—only after that of the birds (as far as I am

able). It is from Garcia alone that I learned some few important things.' But first she had to undergo the ordeal of a shock that tested her to the very soul. The strain of work in these past years had told on her undeveloped powers. 'Mademoiselle, it would be useless to teach you,' said Garcia, 'you have no voice left.' She had broken down in singing the scene he had selected in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, though she knew the music well. She was half-dead with nervousness, and this shattering judgment, as she told afterwards, crowded into a moment the misery of a life-time. But stunned and tearful as she was, her purpose remained steadfast. Her sense of vocation was too strong to be quenched by the adverse opinion even of the greatest. She besought Garcia for further advice, and he, moved by her earnestness, recommended her to give her voice absolute rest for six weeks; she must not sing one note; there must even be as little speaking as possible. 'Come back to me at the end of the time,' he said, 'and then we shall see what can be done.' The time of waiting, in enforced silence, was hard to bear for such an eager temperament. Mdlle. Lind made good use of it, however, for she devoted those six weeks to the study of French and Italian, covering pages of foolscap with conjugations of verbs regular and irregular, and other grammatical studies, while the street-cries of Paris rang in her head with maddening persistence. Long years afterwards, in the green seclusion of English woods, she could still hear their monotonous echoes. The end justified her patience and hope. Soon she could write, 'I have already had five lessons from Signor Garcia, the brother of Madame Malibran. I have to begin again from the beginning; to sing scales, up and down, slowly, and with great care; then, to prac-

tise the shake—awfully slowly; and to try to get rid of the hoarseness, if possible. Moreover, he is very particular about the breathing.' Later, 'I am well satisfied with my singing-master. With regard to my weak points especially he is excellent. . . . And I believe him also to be a very good man. . . . A great deal still remains to be done, but the worst is over. Garcia is satisfied with me.'

Christmas came and brought longings for home. She relieved herself in her letters to Madame Lindblad. 'Do you know what I am doing besides writing to you? I am munching away—at what? just guess? at a bit of genuine Swedish *Knäckebröd*, which Herr Blumm has brought me. . . . Ah! think of me when you go to the Julotta' (the eight o'clock Yule service, or early service, on Christmas Day), 'for it is the most glorious thing your poor Jenny knows of.' The Swedish *Knäckebröd* is a kind of rye-bread, baked in large thin round cakes, with a hole in the middle; hung up in bundles in a dry place they will keep a long time. Jenny never lost her taste for the old simple fare of her native country. Years afterwards, when Europe and America were ringing with her fame, she wrote from Boston to her Swedish guardian, Judge Munthe: 'Few know how unutterably little the world and its splendour have been able to turn my mind giddy. Herrings and potatoes—a clean wooden chair, and a wooden spoon to eat milk soup with—that would make me skip like a child, for joy!' Her thoughts had flown back to some homely scene of her childhood, as now in Paris, when she writes again: 'Ah! who? who will light the Christmas tree for my mother? No one; no one! She has no child who can bring her the least pleasure. If you knew how she is before me! how constantly

she is in my thoughts! how she gives me courage to work! how I love her, as I never loved her before!'

She remained on in Paris under Garcia's teaching until midsummer 1842. Her voice, we are told, 'had now far more than recovered its pristine vigour—it had acquired a rich depth of tone, a sympathetic *timbre*, a bird-like charm in the silvery clearness of its upper register, which at once impressed the listener with the feeling that he had never before heard anything in the least degree resembling it. No human organ is perfect. It is quite possible that other voices may have possessed qualities which this did not; for voices of exceptional beauty are nearly always characterised by an individuality of *timbre* or expression which forms by no means the least potent of their attractions. . . . But the listener never stopped to analyse the qualities of Mdlle. Lind's voice, the marked individuality of which set analysis at defiance. By turns, full, sympathetic, tender, sad, or brilliant, it adapted itself so perfectly to the artistic conception of the song it was interpreting, that singer, voice and song were one. Time had been when, from sheer lack of technical knowledge, she had been unable to give expression to her high ideal . . . . But this time had passed away for ever. Her voice was now so completely under command, that its obedience to every changing phase of the singer's thought, to every demand of the composer's genius, was absolute and instantaneous.[1]

She had indeed learned from her master 'some important things.' Yet what she says remains true: 'As to the greater part of what I can do in my art, I have myself acquired it by incredible work, and in spite of astonishing difficulties.'

[1] *Life of Jenny Lind*, Scott-Holland and Rockstro.

Her friends were concerning themselves about her future. Should she seek an engagement abroad, or return to Stockholm? 'I dare not tell you how I long for home!' she wrote to Madame Lindblad. 'I dare not tell you how far from happy I feel here! but there is one thing in your letter that really frightens me. You say that, if I come back without having previously appeared in public here, they will say I was not fit for it, however well I may sing. Ho! ho! what will happen then? . . . My position is indeed a hard one! . . . With regard to my acting I can compete with any one here. But, there are many other things that I lack.'

In a letter to her father she tries to laugh off her uncertainties. 'Think only, if, when I come home, I find no engagement! . . . Perhaps I may have to sit on the Djurgårds Common, with a little money-box in front of me, to gather in small contributions, and sing while the day lasts—for, says the proverb, "There is no day so long that has not its evening"—and, after that, I go to my Father's bosom, to awake in a better land. And this is surely the highest aim. It does not matter how one gets there, so that one only does get there, somehow, and "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," says the Scripture.'

Meyerbeer the composer was in Paris this summer, and some of her friends arranged that Mdlle. Lind should sing before him. He admired the chaste purity and freshness of her voice, and spoke of her with enthusiasm. Her appearance afterwards in Berlin was the result of this meeting, but in the meantime she had signed an engagement with her old friends the Directors of the Stockholm Theatre Royal. 'She is bound up with Sweden,' her friend Herr Lindblad wrote to his

wife, 'and asks for nothing better than to make her living there, and thus to give enjoyment to our people.' He thought she had engaged herself at too small a salary. 'Her love for Sweden, and the kind letter from the Director of the Opera, have dimmed her vision.'

Home, then, to Stockholm she went, leaving Paris without regret, for indeed its atmosphere had never been congenial to the lofty simplicity—the almost fierce truthfulness of her nature. Her native people welcomed her and gathered to hear her sing in those familiar parts —'Norma,' 'Alice,' and 'Lucia,' to which she brought such wonderfully developed powers. A new career was opening before her, and we can see how deliberately she laid her plans to further her secretly-cherished purposes, little spoken of but ever steadfastly pursued. Her art, as we have seen, she considered a Divine gift, which she was bound to cultivate to its highest and best expression; to use it as a means of earning money for personal ends was repugnant to her; her voice, her dramatic talents, and the money they brought her were all a trust from God. Out of her small salary in former days at the Stockholm Theatre she had bestowed many secret benevolences. She felt that now she must be free to exercise her liberality unquestioned. But alas! she felt sadly the difference between her parents' point of view and her own. Legally, she could not become independent of their control, until she became a married woman. Though she had looked forward with affection to seeing them on her return to Sweden, she did not take up house with them. She rented rooms in which she lived with her faithful Louise Johanssen. She was resolved to maintain them in comfort, but it was essential that occasion for friction should be removed. She was able, out of her hitherto

scanty earnings, to settle them happily in a pleasant little country-home, where they could live free from care and annoyance. At the same time they transferred, under legal forms, their right of guardianship to a person most worthy of that responsibility, one of the Judges of the Law Courts, Herr Henrik Munthe. This good man was a tower of strength to his ward and friend, as long as he lived. Her letters to him, chiefly concerned with details of her numerous charities, were found after his death, carefully treasured and tied up with the words written across them—'the mirror of a noble soul.' With Judge Munthe and the Lindblads, Mdlle. Jenny had friends at hand whom she could consult and lean on in all her difficulties. And indeed such support was very necessary to her, for the practical affairs of life tried her sorely. She had to pay the penalty of her artistic temperament. She was impulsive, yet self-distrustful: her lofty standard of aim and conduct made her impatient and disdainful of the petty vanities and insincerities she could not avoid seeing around her. Life could not be easy for this girl, with her shy, unworldly pride that would not stoop to give or receive a word of flattery.

Yet forth into the great world she must go. First we hear of her at Copenhagen, where her success was 'tremendous—overpowering.' Yet such apprehensions overcame her that it was with great difficulty she had been persuaded to sing. She shed tears of nervous misery—'she had been entrapped into a promise—she could not appear.' The manager, her friend Mr. Bournonville, hurt by her protestations, at last said he would cancel everything—she need not sing. But, as he told it afterwards, this roused the woman in her; 'as I began to doubt, she waxed firm.' She sang in 'her

incomparable' part of 'Alice,' gaining not only the applause but the affection of her Danish audience. The students gathered round the house where she was staying, with songs and blazing torches in her honour. Here, while people were clamouring to see and hear her again, she took the chance of a quiet hour to slip quietly into the house of a young couple, friends of her host. The husband was just recovering from a dangerous illness; he was a lover of music, and he had fretted over the disappointment of not hearing Jenny Lind sing. Here then she was, at his bedside, ready 'to charm, with her heavenly voice, the hearts of the two young people.' The pleasure of her visit stimulated the sick man's recovery, and her name was never spoken in that little household without a blessing. Here, too, she gained the friendship of Hans Andersen, who presented her with his poems and tales. She calls him affectionately her brother when she writes to him. (She was a bad correspondent; every letter begins with an apology for her long silence.) It was a year or two after this, in Berlin, that Hans Andersen tells us of his lonely Christmas Eve there. 'I heard afterwards that in each one of the family circles in which I had truly been received as a relative, it had been supposed that I was already engaged elsewhere: but in reality I sat quite alone in my room at the hotel and thought of home. I sat at the open window and looked up at the star-spangled heavens. That was the Christmas-tree that had been lighted up for me. "Father in Heaven!" I prayed as the children pray, "what wilt thou give me?"

'When my friends heard of my lonely Christmas feast, they lighted up many Christmas-trees for me on following evenings, and on the last evening in the year

a little tree, with lights and pretty presents, was prepared for me alone—and that by Jenny Lind. The entire circle comprised herself, her companion (Louise Johanssen) and me. We three children of the north met together on that Sylvester-evening, and I was the child for whom the Christmas-tree had been lighted up. With sisterly feeling she rejoiced over my success in Berlin, and I felt almost vain of the sympathy of so pure, so womanly a being. Her praises were sounded everywhere, the praises not of the artist only but of the woman.'

Hans Andersen tells another charming little story of this Berlin time—of the poor tailor-poet whom he watched making a hasty pathetic toilet under the trees of *Unter den Linden*, beating the dust out of his coat, and smoothing his hair with a pocket-comb. When all was arranged, he came up composedly to pay his respects to the famous story-teller as a brother-poet. The two sat side by side on the sofa and talked; Hans Andersen was 'greatly touched by the simplicity and contentment of his visitor; he longed to show him some kindness. He proposed taking him to hear Jenny Lind. "I have already heard her," he said, smiling. "I could not afford to buy a ticket; so I went to the man who provides the 'supers,' and asked him if I could not go on as a 'super' one evening in *Norma*. To this he agreed. So I was dressed up as a Roman soldier, with a long sword at my side, and in that guise appeared upon the stage; and I heard her better than any one else, for I stood close beside her. Ah! how she sang! and how she acted! I could not stand it: it made me weep. But they were furious at that. The manager forbade it, and would never permit me to set foot upon the stage again—for one must not weep upon the stage."'

By this time the Swedish singer had taken Berlin by storm. Meyerbeer had never forgotten the effect of her voice as he heard it in Paris and in his Opera *Das Feldlager in Schlesien* (the Camp in Silesia); he designed the heroine's part for her. Before Mdlle. Lind appeared in public, Meyerbeer was asked to bring her to sing at a musical party given by the then Princess of Prussia (the late Empress Augusta of Germany). The impression she made is recalled by the daughter of one of the ladies present, Lady Westmorland, who 'went in, full of curiosity, and saw sitting by the piano a thin, pale, plain-looking girl, looking awkward and nervous, and like a very shy country school-girl. She would not believe her eyes, and said that she and her neighbours . . . began to speculate whether Meyerbeer was playing a practical joke on them, and when he came up to speak to them my mother asked him if he was really serious in meaning to bring that frightened child out in his Opera. His only answer was "*Attendez*, Miladi."

'When the time came for her song—I do not know what it was—my mother used to say it was the most extraordinary experience she ever remembered. The wonderful notes came ringing out, but, over and above that, was the wonderful transfiguration—no other word could apply—which came over her entire face and figure, lightening them up with the whole fire and dignity of her genius. The effect on the whole audience was simply marvellous, and to the last day of her life my mother used to recall it vividly and its effect upon her. . . .'

It is of course impossible within the limits of such a sketch as this to describe the public appearances, the triumphs, the friendships of the northern singer, as her career developed. But her first meeting with

Mendelssohn at Berlin must be recorded here. It took place at the house of Professor Wichmann; he and his wife (the 'Beloved Amelia' of many after letters) formed a close and most affectionate friendship with Mdlle. Lind; in her travels she often longed after the peace and blessedness of home-life as she had tasted it under their roof. She herself describes her conversation with the famous composer, who was 'incredibly friendly and polite, and spoke of her "great talent."' With her usual directness, she asked him 'On what grounds he spoke?' 'Well!' he said, 'for this reason, that all who have heard you are of one opinion only, and that is so rare a thing that it is quite sufficient to prove to me what you are.'

Hans Andersen has recorded what Mendelssohn said to him of Jenny Lind. 'There will not be born, in a whole century, another being as gifted as she.' The meeting of the artists at Berlin was the beginning of a warm friendship; it could hardly have been otherwise with two whose aims were already so united. When she went to Vienna, Mendelssohn wrote to his friend, Franz Hauser, begging him to be friendly and useful to her during her stay there. 'For I take it for granted that it will be with you as with me; and that you will never be able to look upon her as a stranger, but as one of ourselves—a member of that invisible Church, concerning which you write to me sometimes. She pulls at the same rope with all of us who are really in earnest about that; thinks about it; strives for it; and if all goes well with her in the world, it is as pleasant to me as if it went well with me: for it helps me, and all of us, so well on our road.'

Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna, and the South German towns all tell the same story. In each capital she visited she

gained fresh laurels, not always without hostility and prejudice to overcome, besides the agonies of apprehension she underwent when she had to appear for the first time before a strange audience. 'The good God did not desert me, though I deserved it for my unreasonable nervousness. Do not be angry with me, I beg you! I can do nothing with regard to that, and I myself suffer enough for it. The three days beforehand were dreadful. The idea of turning back was ever in my mind; and I should have done it, if it would not have given offence to so many people.'

The same horror fell upon her when at last she came to London, though she had written that she was beginning to feel accustomed to success, yet 'I cannot conceive what it is that satisfies the people. It is God's doing.' It was in April 1847 that Jenny Lind came to England. Mendelssohn had done much in persuading her to this step, and in smoothing difficulties out of her way. Rival managers had been competing for her; a contract which she had rashly signed two years before was the cause of much trouble. When she arrived, people thought her looking 'scared and bewildered,' and she shrank from the public notice that pursued her. Her friends spent some anxious days in trying to combat the nervousness that assailed her. It was not until she realised with a sort of shock the injury and loss that her hesitation was bringing to Mr. Lumley, the manager of Her Majesty's Theatre, that she wakened out of this nightmare of fear, and flung herself into preparation for her appearance. On the 4th of May, among scenes of excitement unparalleled in the memory of that generation, an English audience made the acquaintance of Jenny Lind. The occasion was honoured by the presence of the Queen and the

Prince Consort, with other royalties. It was not the first time the Swedish singer had sung before Queen Victoria. When the Queen and the Prince Consort had visited the King and Queen of Prussia, two years before, Mdlle. Lind had been summoned to assist in the musical entertainment offered the royal guests. The Queen of England had paid her cordial compliments, and hoped then to 'see her one day in England.' She could be in no doubt of her welcome, for she was almost overpowered by the burst of applause with which she was greeted when she was led in as 'Alice' in her pilgrim's dress, so absorbed in her part that she *became* for the time the character she sought to represent. 'How could I tell how I sang it?' she said, when some point of expression was being discussed afterwards. 'I stood at the man's right hand, and the fiend at his left, and all I could think of was how to save him.'

At the close of the opera the house showed unbounded enthusiasm. The Queen herself flung a bouquet at the feet of the singer; then and afterwards Her Majesty was moved to unwonted warmth in her admiration; her praise was as discriminating as it was sincere. Several times Mdlle. Lind had the honour of singing in private before the Queen and the Prince Consort. It was on one of these occasions, at Osborne, that the Queen said, with her unshaded truthfulness, as she presented the singer with a bracelet as a souvenir, 'I must express again not only my admiration but my respect for you.'

Jenny had written to her friend, Madame von Jaeger at Vienna, whom she calls her 'dearest mother'—'To my astonishment I found the English public in the highest degree sympathetic and intelligent. From the Queen down to the scene-shifters, all here have been

good to me, and so friendly that I do not feel in the least like a stranger—and this says a great deal, for I am ever thinking of Vienna. Everything has gone with me ten thousand times better than I expected. . . . We live most delightfully, rather far from the city, where all is still and restful, the air splendid, and a garden in which the birds are singing all day long. And the trees are so fresh and green. I have a house all to myself, and a first-rate man-servant, who speaks German, and an Englishwoman who does the other work of the house. . . . Friendly faces wherever I look.'

Again to her guardian, Judge Munthe: 'I am so happy, and find things so pleasant, that there is perhaps no being under the sun so happy as I.' The house she had chosen was a pretty cottage at Old Brompton, called Clairville. It has since been pulled down, and its garden, where Jenny Lind listened to the singing of the birds, is now built over, though a plane-tree still flourishes to mark the place. Here the Swedish stranger began to feel the charm of England—of its green, bird-haunted places, even on the very edge of the city; and a home-feeling grew upon her. In this little peaceful place she could hide herself from her own fame, as her name flew all over the country, and London went mad over her public appearances in *La Sonnambula, Norma* (which was given when the Queen made a state visit to the Opera) and others. As 'Maria' in *La Figlia del Reggimento* (the Daughter of the Regiment) she was especially popular. It was a part which she herself had 'made,' and she threw into it all that gaiety and love of fun which was in her nature (as it exists in a child's) alongside the most intense seriousness. Her intimate friends, Mrs. Grote and others, came to her at

Clairville, to be entertained with an eager hospitality that was again childlike in its simplicity and charm. With these friends she made excursions, learning—with much enjoyment—to ride on horseback. They had delightful rambles among the beeches at Burnham, or in Wimbledon Park, where they listened, in the early summer evenings, to the nightingales singing in the copse. Nowhere, Jenny used to say, was the singing of the birds so delightful as in England. As they listened, one evening, to a nightingale the bird suddenly stopped. 'There!' said Jenny, 'he has seen us! Now that is just like me. I should have done the same, if I had caught any one intruding on my solitude.' And indeed the shyness of a wild creature never wholly left her. She was both frightened and bored by the inquisitive homage that 'society' thrust upon her. Yet, when she found a sympathetic atmosphere, how happily her sensitive nature could expand in it is shown by the record of her visit to the Stanleys in the autumn of this year. The fact that the Bishop of Norwich invited her to stay at the palace on the occasion of her visit, was itself a tribute to the singular character of this public singer. 'I do not think there is any one,' Mrs. Stanley wrote, 'among the thousands who heard and saw her, who thinks otherwise than that it was an honour to the Bishop to have given her the protection of his house.'

Mrs. Stanley tells how, after hours of waiting—church-bells ringing, and crowds thronging the streets to get a glimpse of the expected visitor—she was summoned to receive her, and found a trembling, travel-worn creature, literally sick with apprehensiveness and with the excitement of her arrival. She had just travelled thirty hours on end from Edinburgh. Could anything be further removed from the popular idea of

a successful, fêted stage-artist, a character so associated with vanity and luxury, and greed of praise! She trembled to find herself the centre of every one's attention—'*moi, qui veut toujours être la dernière*,' she said. Her humility and simplicity made a deep impression on her hosts, contrasted with her great powers and the applause which met her everywhere. 'Great as was the wonder of seeing a whole population thus bewitched by one simple Swedish girl' (Arthur Stanley—afterwards Dean Stanley—wrote), 'it sinks into nothing before the wonder of herself. You have seen her, and therefore you can appreciate the grace, the dignity, the joyousness, the touching pathos of her entrance; her attitude, her curtsies, her voice. . . . But now you must conceive a character, corresponding to all this, and transpiring through a thousand traits of humility, gentleness, thoughtfulness, wisdom, piety. The manners of a princess—with the simplicity of a child, and the goodness of an angel.

'She came on Tuesday night, and is gone this evening; and it seems a blank, as if a heavenly visitant had departed.'

Mrs. Stanley spoke of her voice as being 'wonderful,' and different from all others in being like the warbling of a bird. The household gathered on the stairs, listening, while she practised in her room. The 'plainness and homeliness' of her features struck people at first sight, but her exquisite smile and charm overcame this impression. 'I would rather hear Jenny talk than sing,' Mrs. Stanley said. All remembered her with affection, from the Bishop down to the servants of the house, and the little chorister-boys whom she recognised with a smile of greeting as she saw them sitting in front of her when she came on to sing. There was

indeed, as was said, something *magical* in the effect she produced, as of a being from another sphere 'looking about her with such wonder, and interest, and reverence,' in this strange world into which she had come.

The friendship with the Stanleys was permanent and deeply valued on both sides. Afterwards when, amid the protests of friends and critics, she forsook the theatre, the Stanley influence was credited with turning the scale in her decision. Yet before she ever came to England, Mdlle. Lind had resolved to retire. Doubtless those ideals of life which she saw upheld by such friends as the Bishop of Norwich and his family, as well as in other English homes, attracted her with growing force, so that the noise and glare of her public life became increasingly distasteful to her.

We get further glimpses of her at home again in Sweden. She had been stunned by the sorrow of Mendelssohn's death this year (November 1847). 'Everything seemed to me to be dead,' she wrote, 'never was I so happy—so lifted in spirit, as when I spoke with him! and seldom can there have been in the world two beings who so understood one another, and so sympathised with one another as we!' His letters to her never closed without some word of looking forward to another meeting: 'then we shall see each other again, and make a little music together, and talk to each other a little, and I think I shall enjoy myself a little over it! Au revoir.'

He had written to a friend of his great desire to be in London at the time of Mdlle. Lind's coming to England: 'True, it is not certain yet, but I wish it very much, and therefore I fancy it will happen. Cécile (Madame Mendelssohn) would certainly come too, and then you must invite us and the Klingemanns,

and Jenny Lind together, and then we shall be happy; and I will put three pieces of American ice into my wine, and make a "speech" in spite of its not being quite the right thing.' He promised himself the pleasure of showing his Swedish friend all his favourite places and people in London, 'but if this may not be, we shall meet again somewhere or other; and I am confident that we shall meet again unaltered.' So, too, Jenny wrote when at last she could bring herself to write to Madame Mendelssohn, long months after the death she mourned. 'One day we all three shall meet together, and then it will be well with us!' It was in devotion to his memory that she laboured along with other musicians for the founding of a scholarship to perpetuate his name and fame. A grand performance of the *Elijah* was given at Exeter Hall, Mdlle. Lind singing the soprano part, which Mendelssohn had written specially for her voice. The proceeds were assigned to the scholarship fund.

For years a steady purpose had been growing in her heart to give up singing in opera. Yet she would not lay aside her talent altogether. It was a gift, which she must continue to use in the sacred cause of charity. At home in Sweden she devoted her earnings to found a Theatre School, to assist young creatures of talent who had to struggle as she herself had done. We see her again among the scenes of her childhood, in the winter after Mendelssohn's death, rejoicing in the glittering northern beauty of the city in the snow: she writes of the white roofs sparkling in the sun, the spires, and the gilded weather-cocks, shining with happiness—as it seems—in the blue air. She envies the freedom of the sky, and yet she feels how 'her heart is chained' to the country and its people. She

had an affectionate meeting with her parents; they came in from the country to see her again in the familiar theatre of her youth, 'My mother is so sympathetic towards me' (which perhaps was not always the case); 'and she seems to be so happy, and contented,—a happiness which I had hardly dared to hope for.'

But 'it was growing cold for her here in the north': death had robbed her of too many dear friends. It is pleasant to read of the evident willingness with which she returned to England in the spring of 1848. She appeared in *La Sonnambula*: Chopin describes the occasion. (It is noteworthy that all the great artists of her time sought for opportunity to hear and see her on the stage.) Besides hearing Mdlle. Lind, he was rewarded by seeing Queen Victoria, who had for some time attended few public performances. 'Both were, of course, of much interest to me; more especially, however, the Duke of Wellington, who, like an old faithful dog in a cottage, sat in the box below his crowned mistress. . . . This Swede is indeed an original from head to foot. She does not show herself in the ordinary light, but in the magic rays of an *aurora borealis*. Her singing is infallibly pure and true; but above all I admire her piano passages, the charm of which is indescribable.' It was her *piano* singing that Queen Victoria had specially admired.

But, after this year, her admirers saw her no more on the operatic stage. People still argue over her reasons for retiring when her powers and her fame were still at their highest. The fact that she founded a Theatre School in her native place shows that she was far from casting any reflection upon the profession in which she herself had been brought up. Physical reasons had much to do with it. The exacting parts

in which she appeared, the intensity with which she threw herself into them, exhausted her; and it must be remembered that she had endured this recurring strain from the time that she was a child of nine years. And if ever there was a creature formed for quietness, happiness, and the peaceful delights of home, it was this Swedish girl, marvellously gifted as she was to delight and enthral multitudes. Her mind was made up, and her friends, whatever regrets they may have felt, were obliged to acquiesce in her decision. 'I am tired, body and soul; but my soul *most*! More my soul than my body!' she had written, and to another friend she spoke of her repugnance to the 'calumnies of a theatrical life.' The applause, indeed, must have often been dearly bought when we think of the agonies of apprehension she suffered before committing herself to a new audience. Long afterwards, the sight of her old stage costumes only recalled to her the tension and tremor of mind and body with which she wore them. Now she wrote to one of her Berlin friends: 'I have begun to sing what has long been the wish of my heart —oratorio. There I can sing the music I love, and the words make me feel a better being.' And indeed it is as a singer of sacred music, and of her own native Swedish songs, that Jenny Lind is best loved and remembered in England.

She still occupied the cottage at Brompton where she gave her friends such gleeful welcome, making gay little extemporised feasts for them, with lighted candles and all the best her house could afford. This modest dwelling was a centre of a benevolence that was truly royal. In this winter of 1849 she bestowed of her earnings on charities and other objects of her goodwill over £10,000. The generosity of public artists

is proverbial, but few have practised it so systematically, so *religiously*, as Jenny Lind.

Her friends heard rumours of her marriage. Twice she had become engaged, first to Herr Julius Günther at Stockholm. He was the tenor at the Theatre Royal there, and all his interests were bound up with the stage which she was now determined to leave. After corresponding with each other for some months, they both came to see that the divergence in their aims gave them little prospect of happiness together, and the engagement was broken by mutual consent. Not long after this she met Captain Harris, a young officer in the Indian Army: he was a brother-in-law of Mr. Joseph Grote, in whose house she was staying at the time. Captain Harris was an earnest-minded, good young man; he was fascinated by the Swedish lady, whose utter simplicity and unworldliness belied everything he had ever heard of the stage. At first she confessed she thought him a very dull young man, but his devotion touched her, for he was an earnest and persevering lover, and they became engaged. Her heart was really in the matter by her own confession afterwards, but endless difficulties arose. It was impossible to reconcile Jenny with her love of her art and her honest pride in her profession, to the narrow notions of the circle to which Captain Harris belonged. His mother was specially bitter against the stage, though she was ready to welcome Mdlle. Lind as her son's wife. (Not the most prejudiced person could have called *her* 'theatrical.') The intervention of her friends helped finally to clear the situation. They insisted that Jenny should have powers over the disposal of her own earnings, and freedom to sing as she thought fit. Captain Harris objected to such freedom as

'unscriptural'; there could only be one end—the engagement was renounced on both sides. Yet she kept a tender recollection of this episode; she wrote to her 'German mother' (Madame Birch-Pfeiffer) to tell her how very near marriage she had been—'I have indeed greatly wished for it, for few have more strongly than I the real inner feeling of a wife: and a deep blessing it would have been to me to have called a child "my own."' She speaks of how she loves the truthfulness of the English character as she saw it expressed in this young man. She resolves, with a sort of rapture, to devote herself to 'well-doing' for others as long as she lived.

This was the motive that induced her to accept Mr. Barnum's offer of a concert-tour in America. His terms were generous, and she was eager to see the wonders of the new world. With her earnings she intended to endow a hospital for poor children at home in Sweden. She started from Liverpool in August 1850. The people gathered to bid her farewell in crowds, as if to greet a newly crowned king or a victorious general. She spent her last hours in writing a farewell to her father and mother, describing to them the steamer in which she is to sail, 'Nothing grander of its kind, I should think, could be found in any country, 300 feet by 80 feet, and decorated like a rich private house.' Such were the marvels of ocean-travel sixty years since. She had got a little daguerreotype picture taken of herself to send to her mother as a farewell: 'Think of me with friendliness, and give me now and then your blessing, for a parent's blessing is something good to travel with.'

In America her life entered upon a new stage: she was married to Mr. Otto Goldschmidt in February

1852: he had joined the concert party as pianist and accompanist in the May of the preceding year. Again and again to her most intimate friends she had spoken with weariness of having to go 'roving about *alone, alone,* ever to have to rely on my own judgment . . . oh, it is not easy!' Now, in the very letter in which she laments over the news of her mother's death, she writes of her marriage, and of how she has found in this 'chosen companion of her life all that her heart ever wanted and loved.'

With this she passes into the complete retirement she was longing for. She had given more than twenty years of her life to the public service of her art; she had earned the right to a little quietness. Not in Sweden, but in England, her adopted country, did she gain for the first time a real home, with doors shut fast on curiosity and publicity, and all the din and bustle of Vanity Fair with its 'mazes of heat and sound.' When she was resting before her American tour, she had written of her happiness in the quiet, with her music, her little dog, her books, her study—and 'the great number of sublime remembrances.' Now a new and beautiful life was to unfold itself, rooted in the past and reaching out to the future through tender family-ties. Madame Goldschmidt had always loved the English country-scenes, 'I want to be near trees, and water, and a cathedral,' she had said in a moment of longing. Here, then, she lived in chosen retreat, and saw her children and her children's children grow up round her. Her friends came to her—those she considered worthy—and her standard of friendship was high. Mrs. Stanley tells, of her earlier days, that she had said she had no wish to make more friends, she had enough; 'and her manner is that of preventing

any intimacy.' With all her modesty, her humility, even, hers was a personality upon which no one could intrude; now, with the added dignity of years, she became a formidable lady to face. Convention and artificiality withered away before her. She would literally turn her back with scant courtesy upon 'lion-hunters,' as when some Americans sought to make her acquaintance. 'You want to see me?' she said. 'Well, here is my front!' Then turning quickly round, 'There is my back. Now' (curtseying grandly) 'you can go home and say that you have seen me!' But to those friends whom she had admitted to her intimacy she showed herself in all her originality and charm—an absolutely *real* person. She made a country home for herself among the Malvern Hills, where she could enjoy the beauty of the wide views of fairest English landscape, and here she spent some of her happiest days—in her later years among her daughter's children, when she might be seen dressed in some quaint costume, reminiscent of her native land—wide straw bonnet and gaily-coloured shawl. Her old life and its interests were not forgotten, in her connection with the Royal College of Music, to which she devoted much time and labour. She was much interested in the girl-students there: 'If . . . would put her mind into her work, she might become a singer,' she wrote of one of them, thinking perhaps of the 'incredible work' she had put into her own time of training. 'Singing is as much moral and mental as it is mechanical,' she adds.

The triumphs of her singing days were kept alive by meetings with old friends—as when the Queen of Hanover came to London. Madame Goldschmidt went to see her at Claridge's Hotel; the relations between the two ladies had always been very affectionate, and

she was received 'with open arms'; she remained for three hours with the King and Queen, 'exchanging sad and joyous reminiscences.'

But the story of these years has never been given to the world, for Madame Goldschmidt continued to guard all that concerned her private life and history with an ever-growing jealousy of public curiosity. Her last years were spent under the shadow of weakness and sore sickness. As she lay dying among the beautiful surroundings of her cottage at Malvern, she lamented that she had never seen the spring there. Her college work had claimed her at that season. And when the end was drawing near, and her daughter, watching by her, opened the morning shutters, and the low autumn sun streamed in upon her bed, she sang in her weakness a bar or two of Schumann's *An den Sonnenschein.* She was ready to welcome death as a friend, 'an ugly friend'; she was waiting, too, for that vision which she had seen herself on the dead face of one who had been dear to her. 'Let me see this thing,' she had said, 'here is a woman who has seen Christ.' She died on November 2nd, 1887.

Whenever people spoke of the effect of her singing 'they found themselves using terms that belonged to religion.' 'Men seemed to themselves not so much to be listening to a voice, as to be catching sight, through the door which music opened, of a high and pure soul, moving down to them, through the pathway of song, out of some far untainted home of purity and joy. . . . It was Jenny Lind herself, who, by means of her wonderful gift, was the revelation to them of the heights which it was still open to men to attain.' [1]

Chopin had spoken of her as a being seen through

[1] *Life of Jenny Lind*, Scott-Holland and Rockstro.

the magic rays of an *Aurora borealis*, and that unearthly light, chill with the reflections from unimagined fields of snow, had indeed cast its gleam upon the northern singer, and its austere radiance never died away. There was much in her that remained remote and unapproachable. But it was a still happier imagination that saw her as one of her American friends has described her. It was at a New York gathering, at night. She had withdrawn from the crowd, and was sitting in an alcove with an open window behind her. She was tired, and sat with folded hands, and downcast eyes; the expression of her face was wistful and inexpressibly sweet. As her friend looked, he saw that the rising moon had reached her shoulder, its golden disc encircled her drooping head; for a moment the vision of the saint with the halo was perfect; then she stirred, said good-night, and was gone.

## LOUISA ALCOTT

Of the many thousands of readers on both sides of the Atlantic who have delighted in the stories of Louisa May Alcott, comparatively few think of the long hard struggle which went on behind these outpourings of gay, fresh, simple American life. The woman who, to quote her own words, 'took Fate by the throat and shook a living out of her,' was one of those conquering souls who will not be denied their appointed way, though hosts of adverse circumstances encamp against them. She was taught when young that the inward mood must always master the outward condition. 'I had a splendid time with my mind, for it was happy,' she wrote, as a child, in her diary. Tired and broken, in the last years of her life, she said to a friend, 'Isn't it hard to sit serenely in one's soul, when one's body is in a dilapidated state?' Between lay fifty years of ceaseless work and sacrifice.

The story of her childhood is a mixture of philosophy and gipsydom. Her father, Amos Bronson Alcott, was a disciple of the Transcendental school, which arose in revolt from the rigid teaching of American orthodoxy: it is especially associated with the illustrious name of Emerson, who represented and expounded what is best and most permanent in the movement. But Mr. Alcott was an idealist 'with rigour,' if one may use such an expression of so mild a man. Though his admirers may reckon criticism an impiety, one can

hardly read with patience the accounts of his experiments, for which his wife and children suffered, while the philosopher maintained his admired serenity through it all. Mrs. Alcott must have been a woman in a thousand. She had a large and generous nature, and, though she was impulsive and quick of speech, fortunately her sense of humour carried her through many difficulties. None of their trials seems to have shaken the family affection, but the props of the household were the mother, and Louisa as she grew up.

She was born at Germantown, near Philadelphia, on November 29th, 1832. The day was always kept as a double festival in the household, for it was her father's birthday too. She was the second of the family: its members are all familiar to us, under slight disguises, in her well-known, much-loved story, *Little Women*, where she describes herself as *Jo*. Her eldest sister Anna is *Meg*, the pathetic story of *Beth* is drawn from her younger sister Elizabeth, and May the youngest—dainty and golden-haired and a little spoiled—appears in the book as *Amy*. When Louisa was two years old, the family removed from Germantown, where Mr. Alcott had tried school-teaching unsuccessfully, to Boston, and here they lived for six years. Mr. Alcott again opened a school, but his ideas of education were probably in advance of his time, and his methods irregular, for eventually he had to give up his teaching, though much that he advocated is in practice now.

Louisa was a very stirring, adventurous child, fearless in baby enterprise. When her parents were moving from Philadelphia to Boston in the course of their journey down the Delaware she disappeared, and was found, smeared with grease and dirt, in the engine-room of the steamer. In the Boston suburb where the family

settled, she was constantly wandering from home, and once when the town-crier went round proclaiming the loss of 'a little girl, six years old, in a pink frock, white hat, and new green shoes,' she was found sleeping on a doorstep beside a big dog which had befriended her. The day had been spent in play with some little Irish children, who shared with her their poor scraps of dinner, salt fish and cold potatoes. Probably the Alcott child found it a very interesting meal, for her father's vegetarianism was of the strictest, and the family lived principally upon plain boiled rice, unsweetened with sugar or molasses. The children welcomed the visits of a friend, who used to bring them pieces of cake or pie in a special bandbox. This friend went to Europe, and, years afterwards, when Louisa Alcott had become famous, they met again. 'I did not think you would remember me,' the old lady said. 'Did you think I could ever forget that bandbox?' Louisa replied gaily. When she was eight years old, the Boston school was given up, and the family moved to Concord, where they lived in a pretty cottage, which had a garden full of trees, and a large barn, where the children had endless plays and acting. They loved dressing-up, and 'make-believe' of all sorts. They acted *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Jack and the Beanstalk* and other fairy tales. They had charming companions in the Emerson children, the little Hawthornes, Channings and others, with whom they rambled through the woods, or played in the barn on wet days. This was the happiest time in Louisa's life, for she was too young to realise the anxieties which beset her mother. She writes herself of her childish occupations: 'We had lessons each morning in the study. And very happy hours they were to us, for my father taught

in the wise way which unfolds what lies in the child's nature, as a flower blooms, rather than crammed it, like a Strasbourg goose, with more than it could digest. I never liked arithmetic, nor grammar, and dodged those branches on all occasions; but reading, writing, composition, history and geography I enjoyed, as well as the stories read to us with a skill peculiarly his own.

'*Pilgrim's Progress*, Krummacher's *Parables*, and the best of the dear old fairy-tales made the reading hour the pleasantest of our day. On Sundays we had a simple service of Bible stories, hymns, and conversations about the state of our little consciences and the conduct of our childish lives, which never will be forgotten.

'Walks each morning round the common while in the city, and long tramps over hill and dale when our house was in the country, were a part of our education, as well as every sort of housework—for which I have always been very grateful, since such knowledge makes one independent in these days of domestic tribulation with the "help" who are too often hindrances.

'Needlework began early, and at ten my skilful sister made a linen shirt beautifully; while at twelve I set up as a doll's dressmaker, with my sign out, and wonderful models in my window. All the children employed me, and my turbans were the rage at one time, to the great dismay of the neighbours' hens, who were hotly hunted down, that I might tweak out their downiest feathers to adorn the dolls' headgear. Active exercise was my delight, from the time when, a child of six, I drove my hoop round the common without stopping, to the days when I did my twenty miles in five hours, and went to a party in the evening. I always thought I must have been a deer or a horse in

some former state, because it was such a joy to run. No boy could be my friend till I had beaten him in a race, and no girl if she refused to climb trees, leap fences, and be a tomboy.

'My wise mother, anxious to give me a strong body to support a lively brain, turned me loose in the country and let me run wild, learning of Nature what no books can teach, and being led—as those who truly love her seldom fail to be—"through Nature up to Nature's God." I remember running over the hills just at dawn one summer morning, and, pausing to rest in the silent woods, saw through an arch of trees the sun rise over river, hill, and wide green meadows as I never saw it before.

'Something born of the lovely hour, a happy mood, and the unfolding aspirations of a child's soul seemed to bring me very near to God; and in the hush of that morning hour I always felt that I "got religion" as the phrase goes. A new and vital sense of His presence, tender and sustaining as a father's arms, came to me then, never to change through forty years of life's vicissitudes, but to grow stronger for the sharp discipline of poverty and pain, sorrow and success.'

Louisa was ten years old when her father paid a visit to England, where he made friends with people who shared his theories of life, and the result of this visit was the experiment of communal life at Fruitlands, which Louisa described afterwards, not unsympathetically, in her story called *Transcendental Wild Oats*. She speaks with reverence of the high ideals of the leaders, but her strong humour and American common sense revolted against the results in practice. It is said that Bronson Alcott detested commercialism so much that he would refuse to shake

hands with a banker or a merchant. Yet the bitter experiences to which he exposed his family taught them perhaps to overvalue the blessings of a good income and a safe balance at the bank. Louisa had known what it was to live like the birds in her youth, and all her life through she was careful and troubled over money matters, spinning her brain into dollars—not for herself, but for those dependent on her—with an anxiety that is painful to read of. At first, to the children, the life at Fruitlands was like a perpetual picnic. Even the dreary journey there was a high adventure. Miss Alcott described it from memory :—

'On the first day of June 1843 a large waggon, drawn by a small horse, and containing a motley load, went lumbering over certain New England hills, with the pleasing accompaniments of wind, rain and hail. A serene man with a serene child upon his knee was driving, or rather being driven, for the small horse had it all his own way. . . . Behind them was an energetic-looking woman, with a benevolent brow, satirical mouth, and eyes brimful of hope and courage. A baby reposed on her lap, a mirror leaned against her knee, and a basket of provisions danced at her feet, as she struggled with a large, unruly umbrella. Two blue-eyed little girls, with hands full of childish treasures, sat under one old shawl, chatting happily together. . . . The wind whistled over the bleak hills, the rain fell in a despondent drizzle, and night began to fall. But the calm man gazed as tranquilly into the fog as if he beheld a radiant bow of promise spanning the grey sky. The cheery woman tried to cover every one but herself with the big umbrella. . . . The little girls sang lullabies to their dolls in soft, maternal murmurs. . . . Thus these modern pilgrims journeyed out of the old

world to found a new one in the wilderness. . . . The prospective Eden at present consisted of an old red farmhouse, a dilapidated barn, many acres of meadowland, and a grove.'

The farm on which these idealists proposed to show the world a new way of life was at Harvard, near Concord, and although there was no prospect of harvest beyond what ten old apple-trees could afford, they had hopefully called the place 'Fruitlands.' They forbade themselves the use of money; their food was limited to grain, fruits and roots; they were not even to wear woollen clothing, as this meant robbing the sheep of their warm fleeces—men and women alike were dressed in queer linen garments. It was proposed that they should go barefoot to escape the guilt of using animals' hides, but here the long-suffering Mrs. Alcott rebelled, and insisted on having shoes for herself and her girls. This woman was the true heroine of the experiment, for she bore her part in it with the most unselfish loyalty, relieving herself only by letting fly a shaft of ridicule now and then. Few mothers would have been as complacent as she, when she arrived with her children that night, wet and tired, at the old red farmhouse. Fortunately one of the adherents of the new society had arrived before them, so that they found a fire at which they could warm themselves, but there was no furniture. They were glad to rest on blocks of wood, while they made a meal of roasted potatoes, brown bread, and water. Next day their household belongings came, and Mrs. Alcott settled down to this strange life as best she could. Each member of the society was expected to contribute to the general welfare and support by doing the work for which he found himself best fitted. Afterwards, when some

one asked if they kept any beasts of burden to help them with the farm-work, Mrs. Alcott replied with a flash of sarcasm, 'Only one woman.' There was but one other woman in the community, a Miss Page, who was not inclined to hard work—'an amiable, sentimental, lazy person.' She gave the children music-lessons sometimes, but Louisa wrote fiercely in her diary, 'I hate Miss P.; she is so fussy.' A Mr. Lane was one of the ruling spirits; the young Alcotts had lessons from him, but they did not like him.

The programme of their days was thus set forth: 'We shall rise at dawn, begin the day by bathing, followed by music, and then a chaste repast of bread and fruit. Each one finds congenial occupation till the meridian meal, when some deep-searching conversation gives rest to the body and development to the mind. Healthful labour again engages us till the next meal, when we assemble in social communion, prolonged till sunset; we retire to sweet repose, ready for the next day's activity.'

We are not told how the uncongenial tasks were allocated, but we may conclude that they were taken up by Mrs. Alcott and the children.

Emerson was interested in this experiment. He wrote, 'The sun and the evening-sky do not look calmer than Alcott and his family at Fruitlands. They seemed to have arrived at the fact—to have got rid of the show, and so to be serene. . . . Young men and young maidens, old men and women, should visit them and be inspired. I think there is as much merit in beautiful manners as in hard work. I will not prejudge them successful. They look well in July; we will see them in December. I know they are better for themselves than as partners. One can easily see that

they have yet to settle several things. Their saying that things are clear, and they sane, does not make them so.'

Meantime the children were not unhappy. They had a great deal of freedom and out-of-door life, which they loved. They kept diaries in which they were encouraged to write freely, both of their daily doings, and the faults they recognised in themselves. They had a period of 'school' each day, and often in the evening philosophers and children joined in a kind of debating society. The little girls were sometimes tired after their long hours of washing dishes, ironing, or husking corn, and Louisa in her diary says frankly she 'did not like the school part, nor Mr. Lane.' Her happiest hours were in the lovely freedom of the woods ('I am always good then,' she says), and with her favourite books. Sometimes the father or mother read aloud, while the children sewed. But as the months passed, sombre consultations were held, from which the girls were not excluded. The diary says, 'Father and Mr. Lane had a talk, and father asked us is *we* saw any reason for us to separate. Mother wanted to, she is so tired.' A little later, 'In the eve father and mother and Anna and I had a long talk. I was very unhappy, and we all cried. Anna and I cried in bed, and I prayed God to keep us all together.'

Anna was away from Fruitlands for some time, and in her absence Louisa wrote little poems to her. Her 'Imagination Book' was a great outlet, too, and many fancies went into it in prose and verse. After the following doleful entry she cheered herself by writing a little poem: 'More people coming to live with us; I wish we could be together, and no one else. I don't see who is to clothe and feed us all when we are

so poor now. I was very dismal, and then went to walk, and made a poem.'

It was called 'Despondency,' and is interesting as the work of this child of thirteen: two verses follow:—

'Oh why these tears,
And these idle fears
For what may come to-morrow?
The birds find food
From God so good,
And his flowers know no sorrow.

'If He clothes these
And the leafy trees
Will He not cherish thee?
Why doubt His care;
It is everywhere,
Though the way we may not see.'

Louisa's great ambition was to have a little room of her own, where she could 'go and sing and think.' At last her desire was fulfilled—probably, as members of the community fell away, room could be spared in the old farmhouse. She wrote:—

'I have at last got the little room I have wanted so long, and am very happy about it. It does me good to be alone, and mother has made it very pretty and neat for me. My work-basket and desk are by the window, and my closet is full of dried herbs that smell very nice. The door that opens into the garden will be very pretty in summer, and I can run off to the woods when I like.

'I have made a plan for my life as I am in my teens, and no more a child. I am old for my age, and don't care much for girls' things. People think I am wild and queer, but mother understands and helps me. I have not told any one about my plan, but I 'm going to *be* good. I 've made so many good resolutions, and

written sad notes, and cried over my sins, but it doesn't seem to do any good! Now I 'm going to work really, for I feel a true desire to improve, and be a help and comfort, not a care and sorrow, to my dear mother.'

This resolution—to work hard and to be a help and comfort—Louisa carried out royally. Indeed, very soon after this *she* became the 'man' of the family, planning and toiling for the others, always putting their needs before her own. She specially longed to give her mother a little ease. 'I often think what a hard life she has had since she married—so full of wandering, and all sorts of worry! so different from her early easy days, the youngest and most petted of the family. . . . My dream is to have a lovely quiet home for her, with no debts or troubles to burden her. But I 'm afraid she will be in heaven before I can do it.'

The Fruitlands community had broken up, and the Alcotts were left without a dollar. They had nothing to sweeten the reproaches of their friends—who had all along protested against the experiment—except their affection for each other. His family seem to have admired Mr. Alcott as much as ever, though very soon we can see from Louisa's letters and diary how she has to take thought for the helpless philosopher. Her 'sentimental years,' as she calls them—years when she read Goethe, and indulged herself in romantic girlish hero-worship and lonely moonlight rambles in the woods—were soon merged in the lean years of drudgery which followed in Boston. Emerson was the idol before whom this youthful incense was burned. He was all unconscious of it, but he was always a good friend to the Alcotts. He helped them to find a home in Concord, after the Fruitlands breakdown. Louisa's

first book, *Flower Fables*, was a set of fanciful stories she had invented to amuse Emerson's little daughter, when they had roamed together in the woods at Concord.

The family had moved in the meantime to Boston, for at Concord there was no work to be found, though the Alcotts were prepared to do the very humblest. During the following years Louisa served a stern apprenticeship to life. She did all kinds of household work; she earned money by teaching and by sewing—sometimes sitting up all night to finish the long fine seams she had undertaken. It was inevitable that an imaginative girl, with a habit of scribbling, should seek an avenue to fortune with her pen, and great was her joy when she made five dollars (about £1) with her first little story that appeared in print. She had written it at the age of sixteen, before she left Concord. 'Great rubbish,' she calls it frankly, and indeed most of her earlier stories are immature and unreal. But they helped to feed and clothe the family, and Louisa was happier in writing them than in teaching; for, although she was fond of children, and could gain their interest, she had not had sufficient training, nor had she patience for the routine of school-work. Yet for years she struggled on, teaching at intervals—pouring her energies chiefly into the rather wild tales which gained acceptance readily from newspaper-editors, who naturally did not pay very large sums for such unformed work. After she had gone on for years in this slap-dash, hand-to-mouth style, a friend's advice was, 'Stick to your teaching; you can't write.' She says herself, 'Being wilful, I replied, "I won't teach, and I can write, and I 'll prove it."'

Her Boston experiences, sordid as they sometimes were, helped to awaken her real powers, for she says,

'I began to see the strong contrasts, and the fun and follies in everyday life about this time.'

Friends had found work for Mrs. Alcott: she had charge of an 'Intelligence office,' which brought her into contact with people who were in poverty and difficulties of all sorts. Poor as the Alcotts were, they were constantly lending a helping-hand to those who were worse off than themselves. They had no money to give, but gave time, sympathy, help. They all caught smallpox one summer from a party of wretched immigrants whom Mrs. Alcott had allowed to rest in their garden. Parents and children all had the illness, but they nursed one another, and got well again without apparently much discomposure. Their plans were always uncertain, 'A queer way to live, but dramatic, and I rather like it; for we never know what is to come next. We are real "Micawbers," and always "ready for a spring,"' says Louisa.

The young people's chief amusement was acting. Louisa wrote dramas and plays full of exciting incidents; some young neighbours helped them with the performances, and they had great fun over the improvised scenery and dresses. Both Louisa and her elder sister Anna had at this time a great ambition to go on the stage, but friends objected, and doubtless there were other hindrances. Mr. Barry of the Boston Theatre accepted a play produced by the young authoress, but owing to one accident after another it was never produced. He gave her a free pass to the theatre, however, which was a source of much pleasure to her. She certainly had talent in acting, and afterwards she often took part in performances for the benefit of charities.

Other interests there were, too: the anti-slavery

movement was reaching its height, and the Alcotts were enthusiasts in their support of the cause. The girls remembered, as children, how their mother had once hidden a runaway slave in the oven. Many of the Abolitionist leaders were their friends.

In appearance Louisa was what she herself calls a large, well-grown girl, with a finely-shaped head, and good straight nose, which pretty little May, with her young vanity, envied, for *she* was afflicted with a nose of quite *un*-Roman shape. Louisa's hair was her chief beauty; it was a yard and a half long. In spite of her courage and good spirits, there were dark days. When she was twenty-one she writes: 'A hard year. Summer distasteful and lonely; winter tiresome with school, and people I didn't like. I miss Anna, my one bosom friend and comforter.' Of her father she says, 'He was doing as well as a philosopher can in this money-loving world.' He held classes, or 'conversations,' when he expounded his theories. People listened, and admired his eloquence, but they did not trouble themselves with thoughts of how the philosopher, 'so poor, so hopeful, so serene,' was to make a living. Louisa was trying to solve that problem. She wrote to Anna, 'I am grubbing away as usual, trying to get money enough to buy mother a nice warm shawl. I have eleven dollars, all my own earnings—five for a story, and four for the pile of sewing I did for the ladies of Dr. Gray's society to give him as a present. . . . I got a crimson ribbon for a bonnet for May. I took my straw, and fixed it nicely with some little duds I had. Her old one has haunted me all winter, and I want her to look neat. She is so graceful and pretty, and loves beauty so much, it is hard for her to be poor, and wear other people's ugly things. You and I have learned

not to mind *much*. . . . I hope I shall live to see the dear child in silk and lace . . . with pictures, Europe, and all she longs for.

'For our good little Betty, who is wearing all the old gowns we left, I shall soon be able to buy a new one, and send it with my blessing to the cheerful saint. . . .

'Don't laugh at my plans. I'll carry them out, if I go to service to do it. Seeing so much money flying about, I long to honestly get a little, and make my dear family more comfortable. I feel weak-minded when I think of all they need, and the little I can do. Keep the money you have earned by so many tears and sacrifices, and clothe yourself; for it makes me mad to know that my good little lass is going round in shabby things, being looked down upon by people who are not worthy to touch the hem of her ragged old gowns. Make yourself tidy, and if any is left over, send it to mother.'

Anna was at Syracuse; she taught for a time in the Idiot Asylum there—Louisa lamenting over her, 'so beauty-loving, timid, and tender,' in such a place. She felt the hardships and the sacrifices that the others made, and took her own as a matter of course.

The family moved back to the country, first to Walpole, afterwards to Concord, where they bought a house which was the family home as long as the mother lived. Orchard House it was called: a legacy from Mrs. Alcott's father helped to buy it. Here Beth died, the earnest gentle sister whom the others named their little saint: 'an angel in a cellar-kitchen,' Louisa called her, in writing of the Boston life, when Beth had been the anxious young housekeeper for the others. Her illness began with scarlet fever, caught from a family of poor children her mother had nursed. She

never regained health, though she lived for two years longer., Louisa came home to care for her, and found Concord a kind and friendly place to be in again, but she did not wish to live in it permanently. The pathetic story of Beth is given in *Little Women*. The diary tells of 'sad, quiet days in her room, and strange nights keeping up the fire, and watching the dear little shadow try to wile away the long sleepless hours without troubling me. She sews, reads, sings softly, and lies looking at the fire—so sweet and patient, and so worn, my heart is broken to see the change. . . .'

Some weeks later: 'My dear Beth died at three this morning, after two years of patient pain. Last week she put her work away, saying the needle was "too heavy," and having given us her few possessions, made ready for the parting in her own simple, quiet way.

'I don't miss her as I expected to do, for she seems nearer and dearer than before. . . . Death never seemed terrible to me, and now is beautiful; so I cannot fear it, but find it friendly and wonderful.'

She was to make further acquaintance with suffering and death. After the Civil War broke out, she volunteered to go as a nurse into one of the military hospitals. Her zeal for the cause of the North, her love of nursing, and her intense energy all drove her to this step. Nor is it likely that she ever repented it, though she sacrificed to it the splendid health of body that had carried her triumphantly through the hard labours of her youth. The family fortunes had improved in the meantime. Mr. Alcott had found congenial work in an appointment as superintendent of schools. Anna was married to the faithful John Pratt. May was busy with her drawing-lessons, praised by her teachers, hopeful of making a niche for herself, too,

in the world. In Orchard House the family had a safe home, with proved friends round them in the Concord circle. But even if hard necessity had not made Louisa the breadwinner of the family, she would still have gone out on her own adventurous way, 'proving all things' for herself. There was something *einzig* about her, that made her restless and unhappy when she was tied to other people, though she could and did work herself to death for them. She left home this time feeling like the son of the house going to the war. 'I said my prayers as I went rushing through the country, white with tents, all alive with patriotism, and already red with blood. A solemn time, but I 'm glad to live in it.' She was placed on duty in the hospital at Georgetown, and there she suddenly found herself plunged into that world—so near and yet so strangely remote from everyday existence—where the struggle between life and death shuts out concern for all other things. The odds were on the wrong side, for surgeons and nurses had to contend with a chaotic system and bad accommodation. Miss Alcott describes how she used to run through her ward in the morning, opening doors and windows as if life depended on it, 'for a more perfect pestilence-box than this house I never saw—cold, damp, dirty, full of vile odours from wounds, kitchens, wash-rooms and stables.' She grieved over patients like John Sulie, the Virginia blacksmith, 'a noble character, a heart as warm and tender as a woman's, a nature fresh and frank as any child's. He is about thirty, I think, tall and handsome, mortally wounded, and dying royally without reproach, repining, or remorse.'

She had only six weeks of it, for she took typhoid, and was sent home in her father's care. She was

almost delirious with fever when she arrived, and for three weeks her life hung in the balance. She recovered, but with health permanently impaired. Yet she gathered experiences out of her own sensations. 'Never having been sick before, it was all new and very interesting when I got quiet enough to understand matters. Such long, long nights; such feeble, idle days, dozing, fretting about nothing; longing to eat, and no mouth to do it with—mine being so sore.' Her splendid hair was cut off, and this was a trial. 'I felt badly about losing my one beauty. Never mind, it might have been my head, and a wig outside is better than a loss of wits inside.'

She was now a woman of thirty, and although she had been inventing and scribbling since she could hold a pen, she had not yet found her true method. Her recent experiences showed her the way. While she was in hospital she had written fully to her family about her work and impressions there: she was persuaded to arrange and edit these letters, and they were published under the title, *Hospital Sketches*. The style was vivid and natural, and they at once caught the public attention. Publishers began to turn their attention to this new writer, who no longer had to go begging with her wares. She brought out a more ambitious story called *Moods*, at which she had been working for a long time. But she still fell back on 'rubbishy tales, for they sell best, and I can't afford to starve on praise, when sensation-stories are written in half the time, and keep the family cosy!' Was it in reaction from the philosophy of the parent, who took himself so very seriously, that Miss Alcott cared so little about the expression of her own powers, except in terms of dollars, for the support of her family?

A note of weariness and dissatisfaction appears in her diary and letters. She was making money, and helping to pay off debt, but the jubilant self-confidence of former days is gone. A journey to Europe refreshed her with new scenes and new impressions. But the friend with whom she travelled was an invalid, and she felt herself restricted in her plans accordingly. Her first sight of London was unfortunate; she spent 'four dull, drizzly days' there, after landing in Liverpool, and thought the English weather abominable, though it pleased her fancy to find herself walking in the storied streets that lie round Westminster.

She spent a whole year in Europe, filling her mind with pictures of the memorable things she saw, yet complaining often of dull days. One letter from home she makes special mention of. 'It touched and pleased me very much to see how they missed me, thought of me, and longed to have me back. Every little thing I ever did for them is now so tenderly and gratefully remembered, and my absence seems to have left so large a gap that I begin to realise how much I am to them in spite of my faults. The letters made me very happy, and everything brightened immensely.' While she was staying at Vevey, she made the acquaintance of a young Pole, Ladislas Wisinewski. He struck up a warm friendship with the two American ladies; 'he was very gay and agreeable, and being ill, and much younger (than we), we petted him. He played beautifully, and was very anxious to learn English, so we taught him that, and he taught us French.' He was one of Miss Alcott's many boy-adorers: the charming character of 'Laurie' in *Little Women*, to whom so many school-girls lost their hearts, was drawn partly from him, and partly from an American boy, Alfred

Whitman, a friend of Miss Alcott's youth in Concord. The last months of her stay in Europe were the most successful, when she was travelling alone, and felt free to do as she pleased. She had a delightful fortnight in Paris, attended by her friend 'Laddie,' who met her there. He gave her all his confidences, and they parted almost in tears. A few weeks were spent in England, where she was specially charmed by what she saw of English country life in early summer—'nothing lovelier to me than the old farmhouse, with the thatched roof, the common of yellow gorse, larks going up in the morning, nightingales flying at night, hawthorn everywhere, and Richmond Park full of deer close by.'

After her return home, she fell to work on her stories with fresh vigour, feeling her horizon enlarged by her year of travel. She notes in her diary (September '67) that one of her publishers has asked her to write a girls' book, and she 'would try.' She had often consoled herself in hours of family stress by looking at the situation from the onlooker's detached point of view, amused, or pitying. She looked back now, and saw her youthful home-life in all its charm and pathos, and set herself to make it into a book. She was doubtful of it as she wrote. 'I plod away, though I don't enjoy this sort of thing. Never liked girls, or knew many, except my sisters, but our queer plays and experiences may prove interesting, though I doubt it.' She thought the first chapters dull, but when the book was finished and published in October 1868, under the name of *Little Women*, it was an immediate success. All the characters became henceforth living people to every American child—as indeed they truly were. Miss Alcott said, 'We really lived most

of it, and if it succeeds that will be the reason of it.' While this is partly true, the art of the book is also very good. Through her long practice in writing sensational stories, Miss Alcott had thoroughly learned what to emphasise and what to omit. She used short words, and put in nothing that was not 'interesting.' As Mrs. Cheney, her biographer, said, writing twenty-one years after this book was published: 'It still commands a steady sale, and the mothers who read it in their childhood renew their enjoyment as they watch the faces of their little girls brighten with smiles over the theatricals in the barn, or moisten with tears over the death of the beloved sister. One of the greatest charms of the book is its perfect truth to New England life. But it is not merely local; it touches the universal heart deeply.'[1]

A sequel was demanded, and written with speed, to satisfy the innumerable inquiries as to 'what became of' the 'little women.' The second part was called *Good Wives*. These books were translated into French, German and Dutch, and Miss Alcott, or *Aunt Jo*, became a heroine and friend to thousands of children everywhere. Letters from them became in the end an embarrassment to her. She continued to write stories of the same type, woven out of the stuff of everyday life, breezy and natural, and full of high spirits. Yet they were often produced under stress of physical pain and discomfort, as when she wrote the *Old-fashioned Girl*, 'with left hand in a sling, one foot up, head aching, and no voice. Yet, as the book is funny, people will say, "Didn't you enjoy doing it?" I often think of poor Tom Hood as I scribble, rather than lie and groan. I certainly earn my living by the

[1] Mrs. Cheney's *Life of Louisa M. Alcott.*

sweat of my brow.' *Eight Cousins* and *Rose in Bloom* added to the delightful gallery of boys and girls who were like playmates to the children of the time. In *Work* she described her own early struggles and experiences. She followed up her girls' books with *Little Men* and *Jo's Boys*.

We may well admire her cheerfulness and courage. The notes in her diary give us the picture of a brave, determined soul, still fighting against odds, and often in the midst of her success feeling lonely and sad. But no shadow of physical pain or heartache is allowed to darken the sunny pages of her stories. She could not live at home in Concord, except for intervals, when she was specially needed. She was happiest working by herself in her hired room in Boston, writing lively letters to her family about her experiences, and showering gifts on them. She must have learnt the blessedness of giving rather than receiving, but there is a hint of disappointment in an entry like this: 'My birthday; thirty-six. Spent alone, writing hard. No presents but Father's *Tablets*. I never seem to have many presents, as some do, though I give a good many. That is best perhaps, and makes a gift very precious when it comes.' She had gone to spend an afternoon with her married sister, Anna (Mrs. Pratt), and her boy. 'We brooded over Johnny as if he were a heavenly sort of fire to warm and comfort us with his sunny little face and loving ways. She is a happy woman! I sell my children, and though they feed me, they don't love me, as hers do.' This sentence sums up a good deal that is significant in Louisa Alcott's life. The maternal instinct in her was very strong. It expressed itself in the devotion with which she sacrificed herself for her family, in all her relations with young

people, and in the tenderness and emotion with which she always writes of the tie between mother and child. The playful love-making which goes on among her 'golden lads and girls' is described in a much lighter vein. Apparently marriage never attracted her, though she had many admirers. Yet we are made to feel that her eager nature made demands on life which were never satisfied.

In the days of her Boston struggles she had written, when in danger of falling into a 'vortex of debts, dish-pans, and despondency awful to see,' that 'every path has its puddle, and I try to play gaily with the tadpoles in my puddle, while I wait for the Lord to give me a lift, or some gallant Raleigh to spread his velvet cloak and fetch me over dryshod.'

After success came, she wrote, 'When I had the youth, I had no money; now I have the money, I have no time; and when I get the time, if I ever do, I shall have no health to enjoy life. I suppose it's the discipline I need; but it 's rather hard to love the things I do and see them go by because duty chains me to my galley. If I come into port at last with all sail set, that will be reward perhaps.

'Life always was a puzzle to me, and gets more mysterious as I go on. I shall find it out by and by, and see that it 's all right, if I can only keep brave and patient to the end.'

All the debts had been paid; 'Every penny that money can pay, and now I feel as if I could die in peace. My dream is beginning to come true; and if my head holds out, I 'll do all I once hoped to do.'

Later; 'Very poorly. Feel quite used up. Don't care much for myself, as rest is heavenly even with pain; but the family seem so panic-stricken and helpless when I break down that I try to keep the mill going.'

Her books continued to pay well, and in 1870 she made another trip to Europe, taking her sister May with her; a friend made a pleasant third. In spite of the disabilities of shaken health, Miss Alcott got a great deal of pleasure out of this tour. She had the freedom of independence, and was spending her own money. On her former visit everything was regulated by the plans of the invalid whose companion she was: she confesses that she could sympathise better now with her friend's 'nerves' than she did then. She wrote delightful letters home, describing her experiences; she was much more interested in the life of the French towns in which she stayed, the people she met, and the scenery, than in the old castles and churches. The religious ceremonies moved her hardly at all, though she was touched to see the little girls in their white gowns and veils going to confirmation, walking in procession through the streets; the singing-boys in their church-robes; the happy mothers following. Such sights appealed to her entirely on their human side, as when she describes the Fête-Dieu, and tells how 'a pretty young lady ran out, and set her baby in a pile of green leaves in the middle of the street before the Host, and it passed over the little thing who sat placidly staring at the show, and admiring its blue shoes. It was a fine pageant, and quite touching, some of it; but as usual I saw something funny to spoil the solemnity.'

The war between France and Prussia was then going on, but Miss Alcott passes over it with only one or two light references, chiefly about the inconvenience to the mails. With American detachment, she says, 'As all Europe seems to be going to destruction, I hasten to drop a line before the grand smash arrives.' Elsewhere, 'I side with the Prussians, for they sym-

pathised with us in our war.' But there is no echo of the fury and despair of the conflict in her letters.

In Rome Miss Alcott heard of the death of her brother-in-law, John Pratt, Anna's husband. She at once began to write a new book (*Little Men*), 'that John's death may not leave Anna and her dear little boys in want. . . . In writing and thinking of the little lads, to whom I must be a father now, I found comfort for my sorrow.'

In June she returned to America, having spent a year in Europe. She left May behind her, busy with her art, working, and taking lessons, 'learning how little she knew, and how to go on.' After her first visit to Europe, she had thought her mother looking 'old and sick and tired.' She found her now much aged and feeble, and she resolved never to go far away from her again. Her father retained his freshness and placidity. She had to pay the penalty of her popularity in constant interruptions—visits and letters; headaches and nerves again overpowered her, but she notes with thankfulness that so much of the task she set herself to do is accomplished; she has earned enough to keep her family in comfort, and she can cherish her beloved *Marmee* (mother). 'She sits in a pleasant room, with no work, no care, no poverty to worry, but peace and comfort all about her, and children glad and able to stand between trouble and her. Thank the Lord! I like to stop and "remember my mercies."'

Six busy years passed, filled with Miss Alcott's many activities—writing, dipping into society in Boston and New York, philanthropy, philosophers' meetings, which she is inclined to ridicule as 'a curious jumble of fools and philosophers.' There were intervals of housekeeping and nursing. She spent what time she could with her mother; they had pleasant hours driving

together in the little carriage which Louisa's care had provided for her dear tired one. As Mrs. Alcott got feebler, Louisa sat by her bedside working at her latest story (*Under the Lilacs*). She husbanded her strength as best she could, fearing to fail her mother at the last—poor Marmee, who said, 'Stay by, Louy, and help me if I suffer too much.' There was one last sad little celebration for Marmee's birthday—the festive day that had been described in so many stories. Once more friends came, and 'with fruit, flowers, smiling faces and full hearts, we sat round the brave soul who faced death so calmly and was ready to go.' She died a few weeks later, in the dusk of a rainy Sunday evening. Two days after 'we took her quietly away to Sleepy Hollow. A hard day, but the last duty we could do for her; and there we left her at sunset beside dear Lizzie's dust—alone so long. . . . My duty is done, and now I shall be glad to follow her. I never wish her back; but a great warmth seems gone out of life, and there is no motive to go on now.'

Her affection for her mother, and that mother's example in courage and self-sacrifice were the deepest and most enduring influences in Miss Alcott's life. Later, after visiting the resting-place in Sleepy Hollow, she writes, 'Her grave is green; blackberry vines with red leaves trail over it. A little white stone with her initials is at the head, and among the tall grass over her breast a little bird has made a nest; empty now, but a pretty symbol of the refuge that tender bosom was for all feeble and sweet things. Her favourite asters bloomed all about, and the pines sang overhead. So she and dear Beth are quietly asleep in God's acre, and we remember them more tenderly with each year that brings us nearer them and home.'

Not many years passed before Louisa was carried there, to lie, as she had wished, at the feet of these, her best-beloved. She had changes and sorrows to face first. There was May's romance in its sweetness and its pathos. She had gone back to work in London, to show what she could do. 'Success to little Raphael!' Louisa exclaims. 'I am proud to have her depend upon no one but me.' Then Ernest Nieriker, the young Swiss, 'handsome, cultivated, and good,' stepped into May's life to comfort her when she was grieving for her mother's death. They were married, and went to live at Meudon, near Paris, where they had two short years of 'perfect happiness.' Then came anxiety and foreboding. 'If I die,' May wrote to her sisters, 'don't mourn, for I have had as much happiness in this short time as many in twenty years.' News of her death followed. Louisa was broken with grief. 'I cannot make it true that our May is dead, lying far away in a strange grave, leaving a husband and child whom we have never seen. It all reads like a pretty romance, now death hath set its seal on these two happy years; and we shall never know all that she alone could tell us.'

The baby-child, a second Louisa May Alcott, was brought over to America—a precious legacy from May to the brave sister on whose arm she had leaned all her life. Lulu, as they called her, was the joy of Miss Alcott's remaining years, and also perhaps her chief anxiety. For it is pitiful to read in her diary how the poor jangled nerves suffered, how a time came when she could not bear even the companionship of her beloved child. Yet she worked on, almost to the end, writing half an hour, or an hour in the day, when once she would have written fourteen. Her father was in

very feeble health; she had nursed him as long as she was able; now she herself had to be cared for, and she went to live in quietness and retirement with her friend and doctor, Rhoda Lawrence. She could not be with her family—she could only, as she said herself, go and look at them and kiss them and come away. On a cold March day (the year was 1888) she drove in to see her father, whose end was very near. She caught a chill, and after a short unconscious illness, she died, not knowing that the old man had passed before her. He was eighty-six, she was only fifty-three, but her life work was done, and she was glad to be at rest. She had suffered, as those do, who choose to fight alone to the end.

Brave as the record is which Miss Alcott has left us, we are haunted by a sense of disappointment and depression. Something we get a glimpse of in her (of the hard New England stuff perhaps) which, after a thousand toils and sacrifices, remains barren and unblessed. Companionship fretted her, solitude became more and more necessary to her as she grew older. 'How different our lives are just now!' she had said, comparing herself with her sister May. 'I so lonely, sad, and sick; she so happy, well, and blest. She always had the cream of things and deserved it. My time is yet to come somewhere else, when I am ready for it.'

She had set her course, she had held on her way, with few stars in her sky to guide her, and now the voyaging was over. She had brought her vessel in—not wholly as she had dreamed, with all sail set to the favouring winds, but wave-beaten and storm-tossed—safe to her desired haven, where 'they are glad because they be quiet.'

## CATHERINE BOOTH

'THE mother of the Salvation Army'; so she is remembered, so her people love to call her, dropping for once the military titles which they, heedless of mockery, have bestowed on their leaders. 'More than conqueror' they wrote over her when she was dead. These were indeed the manifest things of her life—the mother-heart of pity and of love which longed after all down-trodden and suffering creatures both man and beast—the ardent victorious spirit in which, venturing all things, she assailed the fortresses of hell and heaven, accepting no denial nor defeat: out of these two things, love and courage, grew the Salvation Army. When Garibaldi appealed to his countrymen in 1849, he said, 'I do not offer pay, provisions, or quarters; I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles and death.' The response that Italy made all the world knows. The founders of this new Army spoke in terms little different when they warned those who would take office in it of the poverty, the humiliation, the toil, the disappointments which they must be prepared to accept. Yet the Salvation Army is—as regards its officers—an army of youth, sanguine, even gay. There is more than a recollection of Saint Francis and his 'merry men of the Lord' in the gladness of heart which made many an army convert so jubilant in those early days, uncouth and noisy as the

expression of his mirth might be. In the dark and dreadful places of London's East End, a voice of cheerful song was heard, and the dull, tired multitudes stopped to listen and ask what it meant. Two people, a man and a woman, without money, without influence, almost (in the woman's case) without health, had come there to begin unaided a task which seemed to have baffled all the churches of the day. But indeed they were armed with the greatest forces in the world, love and anger and pity, and they were led—driven, as they believed—by the Spirit of God.

To this end was Catherine Mumford born, and her mother before her, from whom she inherited her Puritan austerity of belief, her passionate devotion to principle, her capacity for religion—all that went to make the fibre of her nature so strong. The mother had herself in her youth made a sacrifice to conscience for which a heavy price was paid. The parting with a lover whom she considered unworthy cost him his reason, and shook her health and happiness. She passed through searching experiences before her father gave his permission to her marriage with John Mumford, the Methodist preacher. At Ashbourne in Derbyshire their child Catherine was born on January 17th, 1829. When she was five years old the family removed to Boston in Lincolnshire, and here she lived till her father and mother made their home in London in 1844. Four brothers little Catherine had, but only one of them grew to manhood. The story of her childhood is one that must be painted in quiet colours. It is a pensive little history of a solitary, delicate child, with a conscience that pricked her baby-heart,—a child shedding tears of grief for infant sins, poring over the pages of the Bible from the time when she could read at three

years old. Her earliest recollection was that of being taken by her mother into the room where a baby-brother was lying dead. She was only two at the time, but she never forgot the solemn awe of the moment. As far back as memory could carry was the thought of God. 'I cannot remember the time,' she said afterwards, 'when I had not intense yearnings after God.' She had no playmates, for her mother thought most children so badly brought up that she would not trust them as companions for her Catherine, but happily she was not forbidden dolls, and her wax-headed family became real living creatures to the solitary child. She was very fond of them, and the earnestness of her nature came out in the dutiful way in which she toiled and cared for them like a true mother. Her spare time was spent in sewing for them, when she bent over her work with a diligence only matched by that of later years, when she cut and sewed for her 'real' children. Her dolls, her Bible, her strange, deep thoughts of God and Heaven and duty—these made her wonderful, innocent child-world, and if she walked in a narrow way, it was circled by lines of vast horizon. All her life through, her eyes were set on those far-off visions of Eternity, and it is not strange that such a gaze passed unheeding over many a field of human interest and endeavour. But she was brought to earth at once by the sight of wrong or misery. From her childhood she loved animals, and to see them ill-treated was an agony to her. Her only playmate was 'Waterford,' the beautiful retriever which followed her everywhere; he would keep watch at her door for hours, whining in distress when his mistress wept aloud at her penitent devotions. This dog-friendship was one of the most natural things in her early life, and it

came to an untimely end, for one day Waterford heard her cry out suddenly, and dashed through a large glass window to reach her. The damage was great, and the dog was condemned. Poor Catherine! 'For months I suffered intolerably,' she said afterwards, and days passed before she could speak to her father, who heartily regretted the sentence hastily passed. There were other companions, too, with whom she communed, 'invisible playmates,' 'the good Catherines' of whom she heard and read. 'I used to like my name when I was a little girl,' she wrote afterwards to her daughter Eva, to whom she had given 'one of the prettiest names in the English language,' bidding her match it in character, and she told how she had delighted in finding out about all 'the good Catherines' of past generations, and how she had struggled and prayed to be as good as they were.

Even as a child she could not be a looker-on when her heart was stirred. 'How can I help troubling when I see people going wrong?' she used to say afterwards, to friends who protested against her burdening herself with other people's miseries. So, when a wretched drunkard was being dragged along the street, followed by the jeering mob who find sport in such scenes, Catherine dropped the hoop and stick with which she was playing. Her heart swelled with pity for the friendless, battered creature. She ran to his side, and walked with him down the street to show him that at least *one* there was sorry for him. Many a child might have been moved by the same generous instinct, but few would have had the courage to show it, as she did, under the eyes of a crowd of mocking, strange, grown-up people. But she never was the sort of person who waited to let second thoughts of shyness

or prudence get uppermost. A rage of pity would take hold of her, as when, driving one day, she saw a donkey-boy using his animal horribly, striking its wounded back with a heavy hammer. She flung herself out of her friend's carriage, hardly knowing what she was doing, and narrowly escaping serious injury in her haste to put a stop to what she had seen. She overpowered the donkey-driver with her passionate remonstrances, gained possession of the hammer, and returned to her friends, fainting with the excitement and stress of her own feelings. In her own words, 'The needless and inexplicable sorrows and pains of the animal creation as well as those of the rest of the world' pressed so heavily on her spirit, that she said if it were not for her trust in God she must have fallen into depths of scepticism. She had a private system of almsgiving of her own; she used to get a bushel or two of corn from the dealers and stow it away quietly in the house; then, as she went about, she noticed where old, worn-out, or overworked horses were grazing in the fields, and when evening came, she would find some one to accompany her to the place and give them a good feed. People who were not in the secret wondered, when they saw her pass along the road, why the horses in the adjoining field came whinnying to her over the hedge as she went by.

In those early days she looked out upon the world from the shelter of the Methodist fold, and, as a little child, used to pity with all her heart those who were without. She would watch other church and chapel goers pass to their various destinations with profound compassion and regret. She loved going to religious meetings with her mother: between the two there was a bond of the closest sympathy, though apparently

the child had, even then, adopted sterner views than the mother. She told afterwards that 'she felt condemned' at having to wear 'a lace tippet,' which was then the fashion, because she thought it unsuitable for a Christian child. (She was then only eight years old.) This question of dress always troubled her, until the famous Salvation Army bonnet came to be worn. She felt it most where her children were concerned. 'I confess it requires some self-denial to abstain from making them as beautiful as they might be made to look.' Yet she persisted, even refusing to accept their grandmother's exquisite needlework lavished on little frocks, which she altered, to make them less 'showy.'

She had a short experience of school-life. Then her health gave way. She was threatened with curvature of the spine, and the years of her girlhood were spent in semi-invalidism. She read a great deal, within certain limits, of church-history and theology. Afterwards, when her public work began, this store-house of reading was of great value to her.

Other things began to dawn on her horizon. A pleasant cousin came, handsome, we are told, gay and worldly and kind. Catherine Mumford was a devotee, but the worldly cousin quickly came under the spell of the ardent personality that looked at him through her beautiful eyes. He went dutifully to chapel with her, though his behaviour there was 'unprofitable,' for he used to try to distract her by scratching pictures on the pew. He was very much in love with her, and she with him, a little; it would have been strange if such a girl had not responded to her first love affair. But they would have been most unequal yoke-fellows, and one, if not both of them,

discerned that clearly, so there it ended. But Catherine continued to have dreams of a future husband, laying down firmly in her mind what were to be the essentials of her choice—chiefly he must be religious-minded like herself, and he must not be a fool, for, as she says in her clear-sighted way, conversion is not always enough. To the essentials a few lighter fancies were added—he should be dark and tall, a minister if possible, and his name should be William.

All these requirements were fulfilled in William Booth, with whom she became acquainted in London after the family removed there in 1844. They lived at Brixton, and we need not wonder that Catherine was disappointed with the dreary streets and brick buildings of the city. The misery of its poor laid hold of her. She was an ardent champion of total abstinence,—not so common then as now. When William Booth and she first met in a friend's house, it was a discussion on this point that attracted them to each other. They became engaged, though their prospects of marriage were very uncertain. Eager to evangelise like another Wesley, he had given up his business, and offered himself for training as a minister among the Methodists. There were many difficulties; Mr. Booth was not one to be bound by traditional regulations; but at last in 1855 they were married. For three years they had written constantly to each other, she guiding, advising, and cheering him. It had been one of her 'essentials' that a husband and wife should unite upon a platform of perfect equality, each prepared to make concessions to the other. The only serious difference of opinion they had during their engagement was on the subject of the intellectual equality of women with men. He denied this, and she

as strongly maintained it. She lived to see great changes in the position and opportunities of her sex; her own public ministry and the significant share which was given to women in the work of the Salvation Army had no small part in bringing about those changes. Both before and after their marriage Mr. Booth consulted her on every step he took, asked her to help him with outlines of sermons, and poured all his experiences into her ears. She sent him warnings about his studies, or his health. 'Don't sit up past midnight singing,' she wrote, for he was already beginning to fit together popular tunes and words to catch the ear of the indifferent. People came eagerly to hear this evangelist whose vitality roused every one. 'Even the children,' he wrote her from Caistor, 'laugh and dance and sing at my coming, and eyes sparkle and tongues falter in uttering my welcome.'

They had been hardly a week married when they set off for Guernsey, where their honeymoon was spent in conducting revival meetings. The making of a new home, which, along with all the other trophies of their state, brings such pleasure to most brides, was a joy denied to Mrs. Booth. Her first year of married life was spent in other people's houses, as she followed her husband from place to place in his tour as an evangelist, and although she was received with much kindness as a guest, she longed for more quietness and privacy. She wrote to her mother, 'We are to have apartments at Sheffield. You cannot think with what joy I anticipate being by ourselves once more. It will seem like being at home, sweet home. For though I get literally oppressed with kindness, I must say I would prefer a home, where we could sit down together at our own little table, myself the mistress and my

husband the only guest. But the work of God so abundantly prospers that I dare not repine, or else I feel this constant packing and locating among strangers to be a great burden, especially while I am so weak and poorly.' She rejoiced in her husband's successes, and in their temporary separations they exchanged glowing letters,—true love-letters. She writes to him from the country, where she was obliged to rest for a time, rejoicing in the beauty of the lanes and the fields where young lambs were playing. 'Oh, I wish you were here. I think you would rest quiet a *little while*! It is so like what it will be when there is no more curse, when they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain. . . . The bells are ringing and guns firing on account of the news that Sebastopol is taken. . . . I cannot enter into the spirit of the victory. I picture the gory slain, and the desolated homes and broken hearts attending it, and feel saddened.' To the end of her days she longed for quietness and seclusion, but she thought of them as unattainable until work was done. How gladly, she said, she would have retired into some little cottage-corner and buried herself in obscurity, if she could have forgotten the needs and claims of that 'life of men unblest' which pressed so heavily on her heart.

Her eldest child was born in 1856 at Halifax. The itinerant life continued; the young parents went from place to place, taking their child with them. Wherever Mr. Booth preached, 'revival' followed, and hearts, especially of the humbler folk, were drawn out in kindness to the strangers. At Macclesfield the women workers in the silk factories were especially interested in Mrs. Booth and her baby; they used to come and sing under her windows, and they presented

a Bible to the child. Her first settled home was at Brighouse, where she and her husband went unwillingly to live, when the 'Conference' authorities placed him on stationary duty there: the town was low-lying and smoky, and they lived in the worst part of it. Here her second son was born. Mrs. Booth became eventually the mother of eight children, who were trained to be their parents' most trusted lieutenants and helpers in their future great work. Before they were born, their mother dedicated them each one to God, and neither her frail health nor her exacting public duties interfered with her care or training of them. In some ways she was a very Spartan mother, stern in demanding obedience. 'Do not be afraid to use your authority,' she said in advice to mothers. 'What has God given authority for, if He did not intend you to use it?' 'Abraham commanded his children. And we are to do the same. You must make up your minds that your children shall not be wicked—that you will pray them dead rather than that they should be so. And God will honour you.' Often she said, 'I will not have a wicked child.' When her eldest boy was a child of seven or eight, she urged him 'to decide for Christ. I insisted on his giving me a definite answer. I shall never forget the feeling that thrilled through my soul when my darling boy, about whom I had formed such high expectations with regard to his future service for the Master, deliberately looked me in the face and answered "No!"' But not long after, his mother found him weeping among other penitents at one of her meetings. Whatever we may think of the burden laid on so young a child's conscience, we can see that what made the supreme appeal to Mrs. Booth's children was her own example. She laid no duty on them, she

asked no sacrifice that did not fall far short of what she herself willingly offered. And she poured out on them the most devoted, tender, mother-love. It would have been strange if her own children had not responded to that charm and power in her personality which won friends to her among people widely differing from her in opinions. Though the children were brought up in a home from which all exciting amusements were banished—cards, theatre-going, dancing, novels, smart frocks (even when they were babies their mother would not have them 'fine')—yet it was not a gloomy home. It could not be, when it was vibrating with energy from morning to night, under the rule of two such eager living spirits as the parents were. It was full of cheerfulness, and of music, for there was no embargo laid on that. The 'pious home' that makes bad children is generally a dull place where there is strictness and repression along with an atmosphere of mental and spiritual deadness. Mrs. Booth brought her children up to think that the only interesting and important thing in the world was the saving of souls, and they went at it to the sound of drums and trumpets. She had very definite views on education, and mistrusted most schools. Her children were for the most part taught at home. She refused the offer of a university education for her eldest son; a friend also proposed to pay for her daughter's training at a very good girls' school, but she dreaded a 'worldly' influence in the place, and declined it. 'All the mischief comes,' she said, 'from upsetting God's order—cultivating the intellect at the expense of the heart; being at more pains to make our youth *clever* than to make them *good*. . . . That is my quarrel with modern education.'

'I thought I should like to be clever, too,' she wrote,

recalling her own youth, 'but I remember thinking how hateful a very clever, wicked person was; it seemed to me that to be clever without being good was just like Satan, and I would rather be ever so *foolish and good* than ever so *clever and naughty*.' Yet when, afterwards, recruits joined the Salvation Army who were men of education, she wrote, 'Praise the Lord for sending us brains as well as hearts!' She toiled devotedly for her children with her hands; her sewing was famous, and other housewifely arts were not far behind. In early days, when her children were young, she felt the difficulty of adjusting rival claims. She was eagerly welcomed as a speaker at some of her husband's meetings. 'But I cannot give the time to preparation unless I can afford to put my sewing out. It never seems to occur to anybody that I cannot do two things at once, or that I want means to relieve me of the one while I do the other!' People coming to consult her on grave matters would find her swiftly ironing her children's frocks, or in the kitchen with floury hands kneading bread or making puddings. She was the most thrifty of housewives—as free from extravagance as she was from meanness. She was never without financial anxiety; yet she desired no 'better prospects' for her children. 'If I know my own heart, I would rather that you should work for the salvation of souls, making bad hearts good and miserable homes happy, and preparing joy and gladness for men at the judgment day, if you only get bread and cheese all your life, than that you should fill any other capacity with ten thousand pounds a year.' She was consulted about a boy who was 'bored with religion.' 'Let him be bored,' she said. 'People who won't serve God ought to be bored. Bore him till he gives

in.' This was hardly her own method, for if she was persistent, she had also great powers of persuasion.

Mr. and Mrs. Booth severed their connection with the Methodists in 1861. Her power as a public speaker was but newly discovered. In the Bethesda Chapel at Gateshead, where her husband ministered, the impulse to speak to the assembled people came upon her. At first she felt she would sooner die than yield to it. 'And then the devil said, "You are not prepared. You will look like a fool and have nothing to say." He made a mistake. He overreached himself for once. It was this word that settled it. "Ah!" I said, "this is just the point. I have never yet been willing to be a fool for Christ. Now I shall be one!"' The people were as much surprised when she came forward as her husband was, for he had been vainly trying to persuade her to address a small cottage-meeting that very week. She spoke, and the tears of the audience showed how deeply they were moved. But little did she realise how much was then involved. 'I never imagined the life of publicity and trial that it would lead me to, for I was never allowed to have another quiet Sabbath when I was well enough to stand and speak.' That 'well enough' covered many an infirm moment, for Mrs. Booth often rose from a sick-bed to address the crowds that were waiting to hear her. She was always ailing. 'I can scarcely remember a day in my life which has been free from some kind of pain or other.'

She and her husband now attended 'Conference,' hoping to find themselves set free for evangelistic work wherever a way might open. This was denied them. Mrs. Booth sat in the ladies' gallery of the hall where business was being transacted, listening to the conditions laid down for her husband's work. At last

she could contain herself no longer. Would Mr. Booth submit to the terms proposed? '*Never*!' cried a woman's voice from the gallery, and the affronted assemblage looked up to see Mrs. Booth on her feet blazing defiance at them all. Her husband waved his hat to her as he hurriedly left the meeting; they met and kissed each other, and the two went out from the hall together. They went forth, not knowing whither they went, for they had sacrificed all the certainty they had of position or income. It was the case of Wesley and Whitefield over again; the old bottles could not contain the new wine poured into them. 'If my dear husband can find a sphere where he can preach the gospel *to the masses*, I shall want no further evidence as to the will of God concerning him. If he cannot find a sphere, I shall conclude that we are mistaken.'

To London with her children (there were four of them, the eldest only five years old) Mrs. Booth went; they had a temporary home with her mother. Mary Hirton, the faithful Irish servant, loved her charges too well to be parted from them. She would serve them with or without wages. Her care for the family set their mother free to go on preaching-tours with her husband. Mrs. Booth felt it hard to leave her children, but she was still more unwilling to be separated from her husband. Besides, she now felt herself called to share his work. In Cornwall, in Wales, wherever they went, crowded meetings, rows of kneeling penitents, tears and shoutings attested their power of moving hearts. In St. Just, during the 'revival,' people became so absorbed in it that they forgot their buying and selling; the newspapers announced that the Rifle Corps would not meet for the usual drill. A woman-speaker was still a novelty. Bills were distri-

buted with the invitation 'Come and hear a woman preach.' By this time Mrs. Booth had become accustomed to seeing herself placarded on walls; when she first saw her name advertised, she told her friends she felt herself turn faint. Yet with all her sensitiveness and dread of publicity, she could dare any undertaking for which vision was given her. She foresaw the ultimate scope and greatness of the work to which she and her husband had committed themselves long before he did; long before it was begun she dreamed of it. In 1865 they both began work in London, he in the East End, while she addressed gatherings in the West. The Salvation Army had its beginnings in a tent in a disused graveyard: when the tent was blown down in a gale, meetings were held in a dancing-saloon, an old stable, or some other broken-down place. The meaner the building, the more appropriate it was to the wretchedness of the people who were gathered in by the Christian Mission, as the movement was then called. The leaders had at last attained their wish, in being able to tell their 'Good Story' to the outcasts and the aliens who hardly knew that there was such a thing as goodness in the world. 'My side was always that of the people. I desired nothing so ardently as to see the poor and suffering made happy.' Catherine Booth said this of her youthful aspirations. In her travels through the country, with her husband, they had always liked best the plainest and humblest of the folk. 'Thank God,' Mr. Booth said, 'the common people hear me gladly. I believe I should be a great deal more useful among the simple-hearted country people than I am among the fashionable, hard-hearted, half-infidel townsfolk with their rotten hearts and empty heads, and yet full-blown conceit and pride!' Now

he had reached an audience of yet another type, but to him all alike were sinners to be snatched from the clutches of the devil. No one who went to hear either of the Booths preach, need expect to have his ears tickled with fine words and smooth phrases.

Like another Savonarola, Mrs. Booth poured out her heart in burning words before her West End gatherings, denouncing the sins and follies of Society—its selfishness, its materialism, its cruelty—with such force, that her little daughter Emma trembled as she sat and listened to her. 'Now they will be offended, they will never come again,' the child thought, and she would plead as they went home, 'I think, mamma, you were a little too heavy on them to-day.' But they came and listened, and came again. Their carriages stood in rows in the street, and halls were crowded. Some, no doubt, were merely curious, or sensation-hunters, others were deeply touched by the fire and earnestness, the spiritual power of this strange woman-preacher. As she denounced the luxury of their dress and their amusements, she made them feel, as Ruskin has said, that they had entered into partnership with Death and dressed themselves in his spoils. She bade them see—as the angels see—on their gay white dresses 'strange dark spots and crimson patterns, spots of the inextinguishable red that all the seas cannot wash away'—the blood of those who had perished for want of their pity; in their garlands 'one weed was always twisted—the grass that grows on graves.' Like the *Piagnoni* of Florence, Mrs. Booth would willingly have raided many a rich woman's wardrobe or West End show-room, and made such a bonfire of the fripperies that it would have lighted all London. She had always reckoned austerity in dress a matter of conscience.

Christians should not 'conform to the world.' She had the distinction of inventing or choosing a bonnet that never goes out of fashion, a 'helmet of salvation,' that all the world has learned to respect for what it symbolises.

Her own appearance is described in a religious paper of the time. 'In dress nothing could be neater. A plain black straw bonnet, slightly relieved by a pair of dark violet strings; a black velvet loose-fitting jacket, with tight sleeves, which appeared exceedingly suitable to her while preaching, and a black silk dress, constituted the plain and becoming attire of this female preacher. A prepossessing countenance with, at first, an exceedingly quiet manner, enlists the sympathies and rivets the attention of the audience.'

No one could hear her without being aware of her mental power concentrated on one purpose; she had a great command of plain, easy, direct language—no 'dictionary' words; her voice was clear and well heard. Her manner was quite free from nervousness, but neither was there any 'unbecoming confidence, or assumed authority over her audience.' She could not sing. Of all the evangelist's gifts this was the only one in which she was lacking, and the want of it hampered her sometimes in conducting small meetings in country-places, where a shy, embarrassed audience would refuse to help her by starting the singing themselves.

Meantime, the collections which her West End meetings gave her, helped her husband in his campaign in the poverty-stricken East. When Mr. Booth began his work there he had little or no backing, no funds to carry on with, not even assurance that his wife and children would have bread to eat. Even Mrs. Booth's high

courage faltered for a moment, but only for a moment. 'If you feel that you ought to stay (in the East End), stay,' she said. 'We have trusted the Lord *once* for our support, and we can trust Him again.' How greatly her faith was justified we know, yet she had some bitter moments, especially when the alienation of friends reduced their funds, and behind her anxiety for the mission-work, pressed the thought of her eight children and their needs. 'I hope it is not pride,' she said, telling how she had started to write a letter explaining the position of things to a friend, 'who might help and never feel it,' and how she had thrown down the pen, heart-sick and weary, and yielded to grief. 'I hope it is not pride; if it is, I am afraid it is incurable! If it was possible to alter our mode of living I would be willing to go into a white-washed cottage and live on potatoes and cabbage, in order to be at ease and independent, but that seems impracticable, at least all but the potatoes and cabbage, and we have almost come to that! My precious husband is careworn and overwrought with his great work; the tug to get money for that is bad enough, but to have to think of self is worse than all.' Again she said, 'If our critics could have seen all the drudgery and toil . . . they would have been less ready to add to our sorrows and our tears by their unkind reflections.' Yet she would abate nothing in word or deed to conciliate a rich contributor. 'I will never be dumb before a golden idol,' she said sternly.

But means never failed, and the Mission in the East End went on like a stream in ever-widening channels. The 'message of salvation' was thrust upon the people in everyday colloquial language; their curiosity —it might be their antagonism—was aroused; they

were 'constrained to come in.' And once won, each convert was set to work to bring others. 'A mission to the people *by* the people' was one of Mr. Booth's watchwords, and in this lay a great part of the success of his work. Needless to say, such a mission could not be self-directed; it must have a leader, and a leader in constant warfare must have effective authority, and so the necessities of the occasion shaped that movement—a people's movement if ever there was one—which adjusted itself to the autocratic government of military rule and became the Salvation Army. Military titles were assumed almost by accident. Mr. Booth was at first called 'General-Superintendent'; then the long word dropped out, and he became known as 'General Booth.' 'Captain' was adopted in the first instance to attract sea-going people. It was a principle in the Army to recognise no difference in standing between men and women; they were given the same titles. When it was proposed to alter the name of the Christian Mission to something more aggressive, 'the Volunteer Army' was proposed. General Booth looked at it, drew his pen through 'Volunteer,' and wrote 'the Salvation Army.'

The story of Mrs. Booth's life is necessarily bound up with the history of the Army. One by one, as her children grew old enough, they were drafted in to help, or placed in charge of some department of the work. Apart from other gifts, General Booth's managing and 'business' powers single him out as one of the greatest organisers of his day. But he would be the first to claim that, under Heaven, the inspiration and central force in the Salvation Army came from his wife Catherine. It was her divine dissatisfaction with the existing state of things that drove her quivering

out of the peace and shelter of domestic life. 'My beloved, says I have never yet accepted the disjointed state of things here, and that I kill myself trying to raise them to an ideal standard. Perhaps so. I must try and roll the mesh on God and leave Him to disentangle it. I do often, and then I find myself at the strings again before night.' Wherever she saw a wretched fellow-being, there she saw Christ. If she was less ready to discern Him among the rich, it only proves that being human she had limitations, though she prayed for 'grace always to see Him where He is to be seen. Bless the Lord, I keep seeing Him risen again in the forms of drunkards and ruffians of all descriptions.'

The early days of development in the Salvation Army gave her some uneasiness. She did not always approve of methods or agents. Yet she restrained her own criticism. 'I see that we cannot have a great movement among such a class of people without a lot of defects and weaknesses. But then, God knows it all. And we are as weak in His sight in some things as they are in others. He has to make the best of *us*, and we must do the same in regard to others.'

'It is not to the clever, or talented, or educated that these things are given, but to the *whole-hearted* and *spiritual*.' It is indeed this spiritual quality in its leaders that has given such marvellous vitality to the Salvation Army; its flags and brass bands and war-cries are but outside things—there is no healing in *them*. And yet they stand for something, too, for, in however rude a form, they make that same appeal to the eye and the ear which the Roman Church has made such use of in her ministrations. Probably no agency has done so much as the Salvation Army to break down

what some one calls 'our insular shamefacedness about religion' that hides all acts of devotion within walls and behind doors. As in the East, when the Muezzin calls and the Mohammedan spreads his praying carpet and falls upon his knees, so men in the press and din of our busy work-a-day streets, toiling for the bread that perisheth, see the little group at the street-corner, standing with bared heads to pray, and are reminded of those august claims which become so faint and unreal in the clamour of the market-place. Christ is once more there, as when He went into the city with His disciples. There is always something touching about an open-air service, whether set forth with the stately ordered movement of a great church procession, rich with banners and emblems; or, if it be such a gathering as one may have seen in some little northern town, where at a wind-swept corner two or three 'Hallelujah Lasses' gather a handful of half-friendly, half-doubtful listeners to hear them preach and pray and sing. It is a midsummer evening, such as belongs to those latitudes, full of cold, sleepless light; the sand drifts up the street, and the seagulls scream and stare from their perches on the house-tops; the women's voices, high-pitched and appealing in their unfamiliar southern speech, contend with the vast empty spaces of air and sky. To the passer-by there remains at the least a memory pathetic and compelling.

As the years went on, the work to which the Booths had given their lives survived indifference, hostility, criticism, until it had sent out branches all over the world, and its methods had gained imitators in all the churches. It was recognised and honoured by the highest in the land. From its first humble beginnings in tent and stable, the central work of the Salvation

Army had grown and overflowed. From one home to another as each became 'too strait' for it, until an important block of buildings in Queen Victoria Street was occupied as 'headquarters.' Money flowed in, not so much the contributions of the rich—though these were there too—as the accumulated offerings, the innumerable self-denials of the poor. And wherever her words had gone, spoken or written, Catherine Booth had children—spiritual children, dearly beloved and longed for. Her correspondence became a heavy labour to her, for hundreds of people, both known and unknown, made her a 'mother-confessor,' to whom they turned for counsel and direction. There is a stern note in the affection with which she deals with these cases of conscience; the veil is stripped off every insincerity, and the way of sacrifice and self-surrender is rigidly pointed out. She preached no harder rule than that which she herself practised and gloried in, as the only Way of Happiness. As, when a child, she had pitied all non-Methodists as people who miss some great and good thing, so now she lamented over those who remained outside the ranks of the Salvation Army. Yet in writing in defence of its methods, she could say, 'We have no ambition for this work to live any longer than God desires, therefore if it ever loses its spirit and life we are content for it to die.' One of her most honoured and valued friends outside the Army was Mrs. Josephine Butler. In the cause of womanhood the two wrought side by side.

Her letters to her family and others on the work of the Army are full of shrewdness as well as spirituality. Writing of one whom she had weighed in the balances and found wanting, she says, 'I do hope you will not throw a lot of money away in trying him, just for want

of courage to tell him at once that he will not do, because I am sure that it will be thrown away. It is the *nature* of the man that is at fault, and not his *circumstances*. He is a *drone*, and nothing, no change of place or position, can ever make him into a bee. He never ought to have left his trade; he never *would* have done so if he had thought missioning was harder work!'

We hear little of rest or of recreation in Mrs. Booth's life. In her earlier letters she writes once or twice of her intense enjoyment of Nature—she has a vision of a blessed earth freed from suffering—but as the years go on, the sins and sorrows of mankind weigh so heavily on her heart, and the struggle in which she has become engaged is so fierce, that she cannot 'cease from mental fight, nor let the sword sleep in her hand.' From one end of the country to another she went, addressing huge meetings. Her courage under physical pain was splendid. At Glasgow she was advertised to speak at a great gathering for which four thousand tickets had been issued. The day before her meeting, a violent attack of inflammation and swelling in her knee came on. Ill and sleepless, she telegraphed for Mr. Booth to take her place. He arrived in time, but begged her at least to come and show herself to the people. She drove to the hall, was helped on to the platform, suffering acutely, but once there, she rose to speak. 'The Lord stood by me, and I spoke for an hour and a quarter, with three reporters sitting in a row just under me.' She had a terrible night afterwards, when she became so faint with pain that those round her thought she was dying. But she rejoiced in thinking that if the devil had put this obstacle in her way, 'he was beat for once.'

It was the same courage that sent her eldest

daughter Katie, young and beloved, to face howling mobs in Paris, that sustained the mother when the same daughter faced trial and imprisonment in Switzerland. Unnatural, we are inclined to call it, and to Mrs. Booth herself it was 'unnatural.' 'Some friends may perhaps think that it does not cost us what it would cost them, to give up our children so fully for such a work. They do not know us.' It was with 'an indescribable shrinking' that Mrs. Booth first entertained the thought of letting her daughter go away. 'It seemed as though the Lord were asking more than I could perform. But I understand it now, and embrace the Divine will. I give her *cheerfully*.'

What a spirit consumed her we can judge from her words to her son. 'I wonder it does not make your blood boil to do something to rescue the people. I hope the Lord will make you so miserable everywhere, and at everything else, that you will be *compelled* to *preach*! Oh, how my heart glows with indignation and throbs with grief at what I see and hear!' Like a flame that wastes while it illumines, the ardour of her spirit wore out her poor frail body. She had not reached old age when sentence of death was passed upon her. The doctors whom she consulted warned her that unless the disease could be arrested, in two years it must run its course. The blow was a stunning one, for her sensitive heart told her how her husband and children would suffer. Yet she hid nothing from them; and in the long months that followed, while pain slowly gnawed her life away, hope, open-eyed and victorious, sustained her—and not only her, but those who watched and waited with her. With them she faced all the grim circumstance of Death, and was undismayed. Even the publicity which surrounded

her sick-bed did not trouble her. It is strange to read of the shorthand-writer concealed in her room, so that no word she uttered might be lost. It seems to us as if this was the last sacrifice demanded of her—this slow dying under the gaze of multitudes—the final act in a life of self-surrender. She began by resigning all the dear trivialities of daily life that mean so much to most women; she gave up her time, her fears and her friendships, her home and her children—all were renounced that souls might be saved; and now, at the last, she did not even ask for a little peace to die; she would witness before the world to the very end.

The last months of her life were spent at Clacton-on-Sea, where she herself had chosen a house to be a Home of Rest for officers of the Salvation Army. This house General Booth rented for her use, and here she went out and in for the last time; and in the upper room where she lay looking out to the far horizon of sea and sky, were spoken the last words of farewell. 'Make the people good. . . . Love one another,' she said, in the short sentences of her message to the anniversary gathering of the Army at the Crystal Palace. To *make people good*—that had been to her the one thing in the world worth doing. Again and again her last hour seemed to have come, her last prayer—as it seemed—was said, her last benediction given, and then she would rally. 'Oh!' she said, 'mine is such a heart. It seems as if it had got roots all round the world, clutching on to one and to another, and that it will not let them go!' She died on the 4th October 1890. It was 'Self-Denial Week,' the annual Lent of the Salvation Army. She had written a last message to her people:—

'MY DEAR CHILDREN AND FRIENDS,—I have loved you much, and in God's strength have helped you a little. Now, at His call, I am going away from you.

'The war must go on. Self-denial will prove your love to Christ. All must do something.

'I send you my blessing. Fight on, and God be with you. Victory comes at last. I will meet you in Heaven.'

The marvellous hold that Mrs. Booth had upon the hearts of the people was testified by the enormous crowds that filled the streets of London when her coffin was carried to its last resting-place in Abney Park Cemetery. Since the Duke of Wellington was buried at St. Paul's, such a gathering had not been seen, it was said, at any funeral. Thousands had attended the service at Olympia the day before, and scenes even more intimate and touching took place at the Clapton Hall, where her body first rested in London: the poor who had been her friends came pressing for a last look at the face of this woman 'greatly beloved,' who had been so faithful to them. The plain oak coffin in which she lay had a glass lid, and they could see her as she slept. As, in the Middle Ages the people crowded to touch the relics of a departed saint, so now women came with their infants, and little children were lifted up to look, that they might see and remember something of her—that they might touch the garment worn by a Blessed Spirit. There was no dearth of tears, yet, in all the ceremonies arranged, a note of hope and triumph prevailed. 'Catherine Booth, Mother of the Salvation Army,' was written, with the dates of her birth and death,

upon the coffin-lid, and the words 'More than Conqueror.'

Thus they acclaimed her, and if, as the shades of night fell, when the flags were furled and the crowds dispersed, the mourners, going sadly home, remembered that the Mother of the Army was no more, yet in their ears rang still

> 'As from beyond the limit of the world,
> Like the last echo born of a great cry,
> Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
> Around a king returning from his wars.'

# DOROTHEA BEALE

WHO will teach the teachers? This was a question with which few troubled themselves,—at least as far as the education of women was concerned—in the days when Victoria came to the throne. Learned women there were, as there always have been, who had grown up in cultivated homes, among the treasures of libraries—or who, in their thirst for knowledge, like Mary Somerville, had broken down every barrier of difficulty and prejudice to gain that which they sought. But meagre and barren was the teaching offered in the girls' schools of the day, when 'learning' meant getting by heart strings of irrelevant questions and answers; when—even in the best and most expensive schools—a girl's mind and body were alike starved under a mechanical system of repression. Gifted teachers, 'born, not made,' there must have been, too, but these are rare at best, and the standards of the time limited their opportunities. Teaching for women was often the last resource of the unfit; as a natural consequence, the profession was woefully lacking in efficiency as well as in dignity. Most people were satisfied that it should be so, but the pioneers of a new state of things were appearing in the world. Chief among them was Dorothea Beale, who was born in London on March 21st, 1831. She came of a Gloucestershire family; her father, Miles Beale, himself a doctor, married Dorothea Margaret Complin, a lady of Huguenot

extraction, whose grandfather had practised as a physician in Spital Square, a district where many French refugees had settled. This link in Miss Beale's ancestry is worth noting, as another instance of that enrichment of the English strain, which was our country's gain when she opened her doors to the best from other lands. Was it from her French ancestry, perhaps, that Miss Beale inherited the clearness and exactness that made her fond of methodising and tabulating ?

The Complins were a family with decided literary and other gifts. A grand-aunt, Mrs. Cornwallis, built schools in her husband's parish out of the profits of the books she wrote. She had a clever daughter, Caroline, who knew Greek, Latin and Hebrew, besides having other accomplishments. It was of her that Dr. John Brown wrote to Lady Airlie: 'A very remarkable woman, though a little uncomfortable to herself and others, and a little too audacious now and then. She wrote these *Small Books on Great Subjects*, which were much thought of at the time, and always considered a man's work.' In those days it was difficult for a woman who was clever and learned not to be rather conscious of her attainments, and to 'pose' accordingly. The little Dorothea heard much of the Cornwallis cousin through her aunt Elizabeth Complin, who was a great friend of the brilliant Caroline. This aunt eventually came to live in London, where she saw a great deal of her nieces, the young Beales; her wide outlook and intellectual interests were always reckoned by Miss Beale to have had an abiding influence upon her life.

Dorothea had the good fortune to be one of a large family of brothers and sisters of much-varied ages, as there were twenty years between the eldest and the youngest. 'All those things which make home-life

at once precious in itself and valuable as a training for the world's work were theirs to a full extent: mutual love and toil and suffering, the elder serving the younger, the little ones looking up to the wise elder sisters, the constant practice of all those qualities which are the law of a well-ordered religious home.'[1] Dorothea's education thus began in the best of schools, and the parents' taste for literature was naturally inherited by the children. They learned to love Shakespeare, through hearing selected portions read aloud. Miss Beale never forgot listening as a very small child to the trial scene in the *Merchant of Venice*, and the terror with which she heard Portia give judgment, as it seemed, for Shylock. She thought Antonio was doomed. When family friends met, and interesting conversation went on about books and outside matters, the children were present, to listen and gather what they could, and so their minds were early wakened to intellectual pursuits. There was the ground-work of sympathy between parents and children.

The Church and the Sunday services had a large place in Miss Beale's recollections of her childhood. Her family attended St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, the 'Westminster Abbey of the City,' where their friend Mr. Mackenzie for a time was vicar. The grand old church was at that time filled with high pews; in her place there the young Dorothea gazed at the devices above the east window—the great golden angels, and the scrolls, full of eyes, awful like the cherubim—and felt the church darken round her as she heard the story of the Crucifixion read. The service was old-fashioned and 'plain,' yet she said afterwards, 'I realised, even more than I ever have in the most beautiful cathedral and perfect

[1] Mrs. Raikes, *Dorothea Beale.*

services, that the Lord was in that place, even as Jacob realised in the desert what he had failed to find at home.' The children had special Sunday books, chiefly a pictorial Bible, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, a Book of Martyrs, 'with dreadful pictures,' and some little story-books. Even with what we are pleased to call these Early Victorian restrictions, there is no hint of the Sunday being dull; the children had too much imagination and mental activity for that.

These town-bred children had no outdoor games (Miss Beale was slow in admitting them afterwards into her scheme of education for girls). They were taught by daily governesses, of whom a long succession passed with brief rule through their schoolroom, in their mother's search for a capable instructress. 'I can remember only one really clever and competent teacher,' Miss Beale says; 'she had been educated in a good French school, and grounded us well in the language.' Afterwards, in 1889, when Miss Beale attended the International Congress of Education in Paris, she gave her address in French, and in spite of the disability of her deafness, along with the use of a foreign tongue, she was able to command the large audience, and to join in the discussions. Her old teacher had done her work well.

Dorothea and her sisters afterwards went to school—a school reckoned good, and certainly expensive. The day was divided between lessons, meals, and doing 'turns' in the garden, very much like the exercise of convicts in a prison yard. The girls had to trot round the garden post-haste, perhaps thirty times, sometimes eating their luncheon as they went, in order to complete the number of 'turns' in the time allotted. But ill-health compelled Dorothea to leave school at thirteen,

and then, she says, 'began a valuable time of education under the direction of myself. . . . (I) gained more than I should probably have done at any existing school; dreaming much and seeking for a fuller realisation of the great spiritual realities, which make one feel that all knowledge is sacred.' This was the keynote of Dorothea Beale's life-work—that knowledge is 'a sacred thing,' and that the imparting of it is a vocation which demands complete self-surrender from those who enter it. 'I was pledged like a clergyman,' she wrote, mourning her inability to guide those who came to her in religious difficulties at a time, late in life, when she could not see her own way clearly; and although the reference may be a special one, it shows us with what solemn obligations she undertook the office of a teacher. 'To teach what truth I had—this only was right.'

She worked on at home, reading much—not many novels, a great deal of history; 'real' heroes and heroines stalked through her imagination. She worked at Euclid, unaided, so eager to find things out for herself that she did not ask for lessons, though on looking back later she saw that time had been wasted by working alone. Her aunt Elizabeth Complin helped her in her studies. She attended lectures, accompanied by a younger sister, who yawned with hunger and weariness when Dorothea, 'oblivious' like Dominie Sampson to meal-times, stayed to ask questions after the lecture, or lingered, absorbed, over some book-stall on the way home. Her passion for knowledge was as great as afterwards it became fruitful in the zeal with which she sought to kindle the same passion in others. Then, with two elder sisters, she was sent to school in Paris, in 1847. There she 'learnt with anger,' for she rebelled against the mechanical memory work. 'I

felt oppressed with the routine life; I, who had been able to moon, grub, alone for hours, to live in a world of dreams and thoughts of my own, was now put into a cage, and had to walk round and round like a squirrel. I felt thought was killed. Still, I know now the time was well spent. The mechanical order, the system of the French school was worth seeing, worth living in, only not for long.' The Beale sisters left at the outbreak of the Revolution in 1848, and so escaped some stirring experiences, as when the house was surrounded by a mob demanding the garden-tools for use as weapons. The brave schoolmistress, Mrs. Bray, was equal to the occasion, for she faced the crowd with such coolness that they left the place unmolested.

After this we get glimpses of Dorothea at home, helping her brothers with their Latin grammar, teaching her younger sisters, dressing a doll for one little sister's birthday, or darning the boys' socks while she worked at German verbs—a strenuous but not unfeminine life. Then Queen's College opened its gates to her. This, the first College for Women, owed its origin partly to the Governesses' Benevolent Institution, and further to the desire for more system and liberality in the education of women. The professors of King's College helped the movement by giving their services as lecturers. Maurice, Trench and Kingsley were on the Committee of Education, and well-known ladies gave their interest and their time in acting as lady-visitors. At first there were no women teachers. The time Miss Beale spent as a pupil in Queen's College was not long, though, after she began to teach there, she continued to attend classes; as a tutor, she had the freedom of entry to all. The college granted certificates after examinations which were conducted in a rather casual way by each pro-

fessor as suited him best. Miss Beale always remembered with pleasure her first examination conducted by Professor Maurice. It was an 'oral,' and she recalls it as a 'delightful conversation; he led us on by his sympathetic manner and kindly appreciation, so that we hardly remembered he was an examiner. . . . He seemed to take pleasure in following up our thoughts on the bearings of the history we had read.' The question of public examinations for girls was one which came to be hotly debated as future colleges and high schools were opened. Miss Beale thought that examinations were of value in schools as 'a test and means of moral training, since those who work from the right motives simply do their best, and are not over-anxious about results.' This was written in 1865. But, she thought, 'Examiners must be prepared not to domineer, but to learn that the art is but in its infancy, and their knowledge of what girls can or ought to do is at present but slight. They must be ready to admit the possibility of a teacher knowing better than his judges.'

During these years at Queen's College Miss Beale proved her gifts as a teacher. It was work that she loved, and she had that greatest endowment—the power of breathing into her pupils the interest she herself felt in what she taught. Yet with characteristic devotion to her own ideals in teaching, she resigned her post because she was dissatisfied with the system that withdrew young pupils from her control and placed them in advanced classes before they could either spell or understand the real meaning of grammar. It was contrary to her nature to acquiesce in anything of which she did not approve, as we shall see throughout. She would rather face any loss or misunderstanding. With all her method and practical qualities she was,

like all the great doers, a dreamer of dreams, and it was the resolution with which she adhered to the pattern shown her in the Mount of Vision that built up her lifework at Cheltenham. This did not mean that she was not ready to learn the lessons of experience,—of adversity even,—such as came to her in the months she spent at Casterton, a time of which Miss Beale did not afterwards care to speak. She remembered it as 'a year of great suffering, mingled with a peace which the world cannot give.' Yet she looked upon it as one of the most profitable years of her life. She had left Queen's College, esteemed and regretted by every one, to take the post of head-teacher in this school among the northern moors. The change was a very great one, for though she was now a woman of twenty-six, she had not lived out of that special atmosphere, intellectual and religious, in which she had been brought up. In the Casterton School she found much that was depressing—even antagonistic, and the eager reforming spirit of the young teacher met with misunderstanding and rebuffs. We are told of her journey there, of her setting out in the dark of the winter morning, first, at six o'clock to Communion at St. Bartholomew's, then of the long cold hours in the train and her arrival, wearied and not a little frightened by the roughness of the road and the 'high wild hills' seen dimly through the January night as she was driven along the miles between the railway station and the school. Certainly no missionary ever began labour with more devotion and zeal than she did. She hardly allowed herself time for sleep in her efforts to be thorough in her preparation for the many subjects she had to teach; and if, at the end of a year, unable to correct the faults she saw in the school method and management,

and out of harmony with the committee, she left Casterton with a sense of failure and disappointment, her experience there was yet to be turned to 'glorious gain.' Late in life she founded a scholarship at Cheltenham for girls from the Casterton School, 'in grateful remembrance of her connection with it.' One of her Casterton pupils recalls her appearance then as 'charming. Her figure was of medium height. The rather pale oval face, high, broad forehead, large expressive grey eyes, all showed intellectual character. Her dress was remarkable in its neatness. She wore black cashmere in the week, and a pretty, mouse-coloured grey dress on Sundays.'

She always held that a teacher should dress gravely, as one who had been 'set apart' to work of sacred responsibility. Her teachers afterwards at Cheltenham understood this. When a student appeared in a red dress, she protested against it. 'One of you is wearing a dress that is an offence to me,' she said, for she particularly disliked red.

It was in August 1858 that she went to Cheltenham. She had spent the interval after leaving Casterton in preparing her *Text-book of History*. Some years afterwards she constructed a *Chart* which was designed to help the memory with the dates of the chief events in general history. 'Why was I born before such aids were given to the understanding?' a friend said. But Miss Beale's reputation rests on greater things than these, though the text-book shows strikingly her clearness of mind and power of selection—'a wealth of interest rather than of information' stimulated the reader into a desire for more. This, we are told, was characteristic of her teaching throughout.

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wonderful record of faith and work united with energy and perseverance on a truly heroic scale. Always Miss Beale had before her the vision of what a college for women might and should be, a fair building, where, in Ruskin's words, there should be 'noble teachings given by noble teachers.'

Cheltenham, with all its pleasant amenities, its churches and handsome houses, its mineral wells and retired Indian colonels, its memories of past glories when kings and queens came to drink its waters and enjoy the softness of its climate—a climate that had tempted the inhabitants in bygone years to plant and grow tobacco, contrary to the law—made an attractive, if slightly conventional, background to the absorbed, strenuous life of constant endeavour that came to be built up there in the 'Ladies College.'

This college and day-school for girls was founded by a small committee or Board of Directors, local gentlemen, whose avowed object was to afford an education 'based upon religious principles,' which should preserve womanliness, and at the same time cultivate a girl's intellectual powers, so as to fit her for the responsible duties of her future life. 'Soundness rather than show was (they said) their fundamental principle.' It was opened unobtrusively in February 1854. Four years later, Miss Beale took office as principal at a very critical moment in the fortunes of the school. It had made a fair start, but financial difficulties soon made themselves felt, and the number of pupils had decreased gradually. For two years she seemed to be fighting a losing battle. Then the tide of fortune began to turn. Many years afterwards, in an address to working men, bidding them help themselves, Miss Beale spoke of her love of independence. 'Time was when we (the Ladies

College) were very poor, so poor that our Council said . . . we will have but another year's trial and then shut up. We never said we would beg people to help us: we would make it self-supporting, or it should die. . . . am quite sure that our college would not have been what it is if we had had money to fall back upon. I myself might have left the helm, and gone to sit quietly in the cabin while the vessel drifted on to the rocks.'

The firmness and dignity of the new principal made an instant impression upon the pupils. One of them recalls her as she appeared then—her slim, graceful, youthful-looking figure moving from room to room, quiet and dominant, the look of power in the calm face and deep eyes, the low voice whose even tones could carry such reproof, though she never 'scolded,' was never impatient nor satirical. After the college had grown immensely in numbers and organisation, and the teaching-staff had been much augmented, the guiding hand on the helm was felt more than ever. 'She seemed to permeate the whole place,' her students said. 'All the threads responded to her lightest touch' (one wrote, fascinated in watching Miss Beale's government). . . . 'Then, for the first time, my soul conceived the possibility of a beneficent spirit watching over the general good, and yet caring for the needs of the humblest individual. Thus she, who so loved to point out that outward things are sacramental exponents of the invisible, became herself a channel through which I realised things unseen.' [1]

Thus through evil report and good report, the college prospered, until in 1883, when a 'jubilee' was held to mark Miss Beale's reign of twenty-five years as Head, the pupils numbered five hundred. Ten years before, in 1873, the school with its one hundred

[1] Mrs. Raikes, *Dorothea Beale*.

and fifty girls, had moved from its first home, Cambray House, to the new building which formed the nucleus of the college of to-day. It was not without a struggle that Miss Beale persuaded her committee to this step. They could not look into the future as she did, when she wrote (in advice to the Head of another school), 'A good building is the best investment for money if you have it. . . . Plan for more than you can do at first, and build only what you can afford at the time. *Don't beg; it is much better to earn one's living.*' This was a guiding principle with her. Not a little of the success of the college on its business side was due to her shrewd instinct and judgment in managing money, and she dispensed her charity in the same spirit. She sought, in the best sense, to put out her talent to usury, and had, as Mrs. Raikes says, 'at all times great skill in wringing the utmost use out of a sum of money to promote those ends for which she lived.' She thought that all charity should aim at developing energy and character. 'To do for others what they ought to do for themselves is to degrade them in the order of creation,' she said in one of her Guild Addresses. It was on this principle that she instituted her Loan Fund, for advancing money to girls who could not otherwise train themselves fitly for teaching. The loan once repaid, as it almost invariably was, the money was again free to serve the same need in another case, and thus it was not twice, but many times blessed. Miss Beale preferred this personal administration of a Loan Fund to the founding of scholarships. She disliked a system by which one school or college could, by offering these money prizes, draw away from other institutions their best pupils, *buying* them, as it were. 'The modern slave-trade,' she called it, grieving at the

thought that it should ever be introduced into Cheltenham. Instead of making a scholarship a prize to be snatched by the most able, she would have turned it into a provision for the most needful. Characteristically, she said, 'If people are ashamed of being poor, they ought to be ashamed of being ashamed of it.' It is doubtful whether Miss Beale quite realised the difference between poverty voluntarily assumed, as in her own case (when, though a rich woman, she lived in the barest simplicity), and the harassing poverty of necessity.

The year 1883 had marked the date of Miss Beale's 'silver wedding' at Cheltenham, and gifts were not wanting to enrich the occasion; these were bestowed, as she wished, upon her 'husband' the college. The old pupils gave an organ which was fitted up in the hall where the school met for morning prayer. The year was yet more memorable as that in which the plan of an Association or Guild of old pupils was proposed by the lady principal, though, having cast the idea into the minds of her 'children,' she stood aside to let them shape it themselves. The college magazine, of which Miss Beale was editor, had been started in 1880. This was a venture in which she always took the deepest interest, valuing it as a means of keeping old pupils in touch with the college and with each other, though she did not wish the magazine to be a mere exchange of personal news: she hoped that past and present students 'should enrich each other by interchange of thoughts.' She tried to interest people of note in it, and to get occasional contributions from them, so as to keep up the standard of good writing. She had a characteristic correspondence with Mr. Ruskin, who in one way and another became very much interested in college and principal. He gave his opinion of articles

in the magazine with his usual frankness; afterwards, thinking she had been hurt by his severity on a friend's verses, he wrote, 'I ask your pardon for the pain I gave you. I had no idea of the kind of person you were. I thought you were merely clever and proud.' He refused, on his own well-known principles, to give the college his books. 'I won't—not even if you set the librarian to ask me; for it does seem to me such a shame that a girl can always give her dentist a guinea for an hour's work, and her physician for an opinion, and she can't give me one for what has cost me half my life to learn, and will help her till the end of hers to know.' Afterwards he showed his interest and generosity in presenting the college with two precious illuminated manuscripts and a collection of books. He wrote throughout with respect to Miss Beale as one who, in his own words, was the 'head of a noble school of woman's thought.'

It is not given to many to see their early work bearing fruit in such visible and splendid form as she did when in 1898, that year of wonders in the story of her schemes, she looked at the college to which she had come forty years before, and saw it stately and renowned, full of eager life. There were the three institutions that had grown out of it, all bearing the name of her favourite heroine, the Abbess Hilda—she who taught men to know and love the Holy Scriptures; who trampled underfoot the adder of poisoned untruth; and who, in Miss Beale's picturesque fancy, changed her wild geese into swans, even as the college transformed wild natures. There was St. Hilda's Training College in Cheltenham for students who were preparing to be teachers, which began with six, and now held sixty, students. This was a scheme peculiarly dear to Miss

Beale's heart. She had dreamed and planned about it, saying, 'What we want is a body of women whose one desire is to consecrate themselves to the ministry of teaching.' There was St. Hilda's in Oxford, now become a hall of the university; she had founded it, not so much for the sake of certificates and examinations, as because she felt the need of the university atmosphere for her students. Thirdly, there was the mission carried on in London as the associate work of the Guild. This settlement, as it developed, had moved to new quarters and a new field in Shoreditch; it had reopened under the name of St. Hilda's, East. When the Guild at one of its early meetings had decided to adopt this form of corporate work, it was a disappointment to the principal. She had frankly hoped that they would choose to support the Loan Fund, to help girls like themselves, struggling with difficulties which most of them had never known. But, as it was her constant aim to train her 'children' to think and judge for themselves, and learn, if necessary, by making mistakes, she loyally stood aside, and allowed them to work out their ideas fully. She seems to have had a kind of mistrust of 'work among the poor,' as it is vaguely called. Probably as far as young girls are concerned, she was right. And one of the root principles which, as president of the Guild, she set before its members was that their first duty as well as their strongest influence lay among those of their own class. They were to consider themselves 'united together to help in sustaining, especially in distant countries, as high an intellectual and social standard as possible. . . . The nearer we stand in intellectual and social position, the stronger are our ties to any, and the greater are our duties.'

'Especially in distant countries': Miss Beale always dreaded that which often enough happens when a woman's life is, as it were, broken off from the deeply-rooted, varied, home-organisation—that energy and character might disappear like a lost stream in the sand. She wrote to a friend who thought of living abroad, 'I don't like the idea. . . . It is different to go for a time, but it seems to me that most English people who live abroad have their lives comparatively wasted.' Yet she had deep interest and pleasure in thinking of those who were abroad on 'active service.' It was said that she could point to old pupils in every embassy in Europe, in many Government houses in our colonies, in several courts of Asia; the seed she had sown was widely scattered. Of the students from other shores who came to the college, none interested her more than Ramabai, the Brahmin lady, the friend of Hindu widows (herself a widow). With her philosophic Indian mind, and her tireless search for knowledge and for truth, she was one after Miss Beale's own heart. She rejoiced that this daughter of the East could join with her and others in the Quiet Days of Retreat arranged in connection with teachers' meetings at the college. After Ramabai returned to India, Miss Beale continued to interest herself in the cause of women there, lamenting over the waste of energy and happiness which went on under the child-marriage system. She gloried in the British institution of the Old Maid, especially when she looked back, and remembered the time when the name was a term of contempt. 'But it is not so now,' she wrote; 'you have seen me and sixty old maids working together happy and content, and if I could send out a hundred women where I can now send one, I should not have too many,

so constant are the demands for "old maids," as you would call them—for teachers, nurses, missionaries, and all sorts of good work.'

Her influence over her 'children' was very striking, all the more that there was something almost impersonal in it; for, as the school increased, she became necessarily more withdrawn from direct intercourse with the pupils. She found her duties as Head sufficiently engrossing, and she sought to impress her ideals on the school through her teaching-staff. To 'act through others, educate them thereby to independence, and reserve strength for things that none but a head can do,' was her rule. Yet her watchfulness, and her knowledge of her pupils individually, was wonderful; and her memory of them, after many years, surprised those who had thought themselves unknown to her. At the centre of it all, she was rather lonely, and resolved that it should be so. She believed that the devotion which a schoolgirl so readily pours out on a favourite teacher may be an unwholesome thing, and that to encourage it is disloyal to parents and to home-affections. She wrote, in counsel, on this:—

'If we make our children lean on us (broken reeds), they will not stand long. If they make an idol of any human being, when the idol is broken their faith goes too. We must try to bid them fly upwards into the sunlight; they must not tumble about on the ground like those poor birds whose wings are clipped. They must look up, not to us, but with us to our common Lord. What miserable, weak, sickly creatures many women are, who must always have a Pope. The children should give you respect and esteem, and you can give them sympathy and affection too; and as they are children, they may have a helping hand, but make

them give up, if possible, sentimental worship. They must not do right for love of you, but because it is right.

'. . . I speak strongly, because I have seen this spirit eat away the higher life of one large school. I have such a dread of its getting in here.

'I know there must be a certain amount of hero-worship in the young. They need help from parents and teachers, but we must train them out of dependence. This sort of thing, too, leads to injustice to those who are not worshipped. They are "puffed up *for* one against another." They waste time and strength in day-dreams about their idol. When a little older they are always fancying themselves in love, because they have got used to an excitement of feeling. . . . Try earnestly to brace them, my dear child.'

'*They must not do right for love of you, but because it is right.*' This was Miss Beale's first and last word, and it explains the lasting effect of her influence. Along with it she set an example of self-discipline and strenuous duty that reacted on every teacher and pupil in the college. She always thought of her own reign there as but a passing incident, but she strove to instil principles and ideas that would break into the flame of a living spirit, to glow and lighten in future generations. For endowments and buildings she was less anxious. 'I have cared more to waken the spirit than to gather funds and build first,' she wrote, thinking of St. Hilda's Training College.

She did not fail to keep her own lamp burning; its light was fed by the oil of secret devotion, as well as fanned by outward observances. Strangely enough, Miss Beale was claimed as a sympathiser by persons of very different schools of thought. At Casterton,

and again when she first came to Cheltenham, people were alarmed about her 'High Church' opinions; yet there were others who held that there was too great 'freedom of thought' in the college; or that the teaching the principal gave in her Scripture classes was not definite enough. This last was in truth the very heart of her whole work, and she gave her strength to it up to the last, long after she had resigned other teaching. The devotion with which she prepared herself for the lesson, the reverence with which all were taught to approach it (the silence maintained was 'almost awful'), a sense of the greatness of things spoken of—all made a deep and lasting impression on her hearers. 'I never understood Miss Beale's Scripture lessons,' one old pupil said, 'they were so vague; but I always felt a bigness of thought about them, and sometimes the meaning of things she said begins to dawn on me now.' Another said, 'She did not go very much into any sort of detail . . . but she always seemed to me to set forth a spiritual construction of the universe, into which no spiritual truth learned afterwards could possibly fail to fit, supposing it to be a truth in very deed. I do not see how any teacher can possibly do a greater work.' Her teachers and her former pupils constantly came to her for advice and help. At one time she passed through a year of great mental distress, when the foundations of her religious belief seemed to give way: a horror of great darkness fell upon her, and the deepest sting of this sorrow was her inability to help her 'children,' when they came to her with their difficulties. She felt like a starving mother to whom a starving infant cries for food in vain. But the clouds broke, and the way was found again. Out of this experience grew an almost passionate desire to

help others—teachers especially—who were in need of guidance.

She made large demands on those who worked with her, or learned from her. She believed that it was better that a lesson should be a little too difficult for a child than that it should be too easy: and from every one she expected nothing less than their best. With it all, her sense of justice was so strong, that she would have humbled herself even to a child in the youngest class, if it had been unfairly treated. Her skill in 'cases of conscience' was great. Once a girl was suspected of writing anonymous letters to her class-teacher, who told Miss Beale about it. Some days passed without anything further, till Miss Beale said one morning, 'Send —— to me. I can see by her face this morning that she will tell me all.' The confession that is good for the soul's health did not fail to come. Her reproof, with its 'absolute impersonal sense of rightness and justice,' and its sympathy, could never be resented. 'Nothing is more touching,' she wrote, 'than the penitence of children,' and her patience with *them* never gave way, though she might show irritation at the thoughtlessness of aimless and frivolous people. She went very little into society, having little time to spare, and perhaps not much desire for it. For, with all her powers and experience of life, she was hedged about with shyness—a shyness that was apt to cast its dreadful reflection on other women meeting her, who did not know her well. Then, she went to bed early, for her day was long and strenuous, and all her ways of life simple. Clothes she was indifferent to, provided they were not too gay. She laughed at the thought of herself in 'velvet and ostrich feathers.' She had been at some function: 'What

did I wear? Well, what could I wear but my felt bonnet and old velvet cloak and old black serge? I looked quite smart enough.' But when she put her short figure (the slim grace of youth long since gone) into the professional woman's uniform of a coat and skirt and stiff-fronted shirt, her intimates in the staff rose in affectionate rebellion, and insisted on the 'soft lacey things' in which she looked best. If she could attach a meaning to her clothes, she liked them; an Indian scarf given her by an old pupil was a favourite, and there was a shawl worked with daisies (the chosen emblem of the Guild) kept as a special adornment for the high occasion of Guild meetings. Like many other very able women, she was thrifty in small money matters: she could act generously with large sums, lending money in thousands for schemes she was interested in, but she did not like frittering away sixpences and half-crowns. She would walk to the station to save a cab-fare, or make other little economies from motives not always understood by strangers. The care of money was to her a stewardship, and a means of self-discipline. She would sacrifice a little ease to set free even a small sum of money for some larger purpose. With all her greatness, there was about her something humble and child-like, best seen by those who saw her close at hand and loved her.

When she spent a holiday abroad, she took the opportunity of visiting schools and observing foreign methods of teaching and management. She never forgot her early interest in Kaiserswerth, where, in her years of training, she had visited Pastor Fliedner and his wife, and learned both from the method and spirit of the place. To the last she was always learning, experimenting, adapting. Her intercourse with her

family and home enters very little in the accounts of her life given to the public. Her father died in 1862, when she was absorbed in the anxieties of the early years at Cheltenham—so busy that there was hardly time even for home-letters. He had written to her at Casterton, 'I cannot contemplate you not coming up at Christmas. As we grow older, each year we become more desirous of the company of those we love; perhaps because we feel how soon we shall part with it altogether, perhaps because we are become more selfish, but such is the fact.' In 1868 Hyde Court, the old family house of the Beales at Chalford, became the home of Miss Beale's mother, where she lived until her death in 1881. She was happy in being spared to see her daughter famous as the head of the great school she had built up, still happier in that daughter's visits at holiday-times. 'I hunger to see you, my darling,' she wrote. 'You have been so good to me always, your reward will come.' To have earned such words was itself the reward.

In more material things Miss Beale tried to teach her children that *deserving* was better than *gaining*. Yet as her life lengthened, honours and rewards fell upon her. The late Empress Frederick of Germany, ever a friend of progress and of education, came to visit the college in 1897, and took pains afterwards in expressing her pleasure and satisfaction at what she had seen. Other marks of royal favour and interest were not withheld. But the friends of Cheltenham College and its principal reckoned it a 'crowning honour' when the University of Edinburgh in 1902 conferred the degree of LL.D. on Miss Beale. She was an old lady of seventy-one, and the journey to Scotland was something of an adventure to her. But her staff of teachers rejoicing in the occasion, took all thought for

her. They presented her with her robes—the doctor's gown of bright scarlet with blue facings, the black hood lined with blue, all made of richest stuff. They were indeed proud of their 'mother' and Head. At the 'Capping' Ceremony in the M'Ewan Hall, Sir Ludovic Grant said that it was with no small satisfaction that the University of Edinburgh begged Miss Beale's acceptance of an honour which had been brought within the reach of her sex largely through her own endeavours.

Miss Beale was a stranger in Edinburgh. She had not apparently been familiar even with such educationists as Miss Flora Stevenson and her sister, who made themselves her hosts after the official ceremonies. She was 'kirked' in St. Giles Cathedral, which she thought beautiful, though the sermon baffled her. She was not sure whether to blame her own deafness, or the preacher's Aberdeen accent—so she wrote. A stranger though she might be, familiar faces greeted her in all directions; old pupils came mustering; several members of her staff had accompanied her. She went to Glasgow, where she saw something of women's work there, under Queen Margaret's name, besides the University and Cathedral. She records the party where thirty Cheltonians had gathered to meet her. After it all she wrote, 'I think we shall come back refreshed, and *with some new ideas*.' Before her tour ended, she had the (to her) novel experience of launching a ship at Newcastle, a ceremony the rites of which she knew so little that she fortified herself for it by looping up her dress and putting on india-rubber shoes! She wrote in her diary on her return to Cheltenham: 'Arrived to the hour, exactly three weeks after starting, having spent the night in nine

different places, and feeling quite refreshed by meeting with so much kindness, and so many charming old girls.' Her activity was a constant surprise to her hosts. 'I dare say you would like to do just one thing each day,' one kind hostess said to her in mapping out her visit. She did not know what Miss Beale (even with dulled hearing and threatened eyesight) was capable of.

For four years more she went on reading, writing, working, watching over the college with all her old energy and method. To save her sight, the friend who bore her company on holidays read aloud to her, and even the odd minutes when they waited for the postman coming up the street were utilised in this way: 'He is still ten doors off, there is time for one more paragraph,' Miss Beale would say.

In 1902 her portrait was painted by Mr. Shannon. It was with difficulty that she was persuaded to this, but the request was urged with such affection on the part of the Guild members, that she gave way, recognising, too, that the college had a claim to have some record of her as principal. In her usual way she refused to regard the act as a tribute to herself personally, yet she did not deny the affection that accompanied it. '(It) warms my heart,' she said, 'and makes me long to be more worthy of it.' She was painted in her LL.D. robes, but with her familiar little dowager's cap on her head instead of the velvet *birretum* of the University. She is represented looking up, and great pains were taken to catch a characteristic expression, for besides the number of sittings she gave, the painter was brought quietly into the gallery of the hall in which she was giving a lesson, to watch her at work. In marvellous health and strength (at the age of seventy-two she was told she had the pulse of a woman of forty),

and with undiminished courage, she continued to the end. Sometimes the outlook disquieted her. 'There are problems enough for our successors on this planet. I wonder what we shall find to do—what battles to fight when we pass out of sight. . . . I don't think we shall want only *rest*.' She was seventy-five, and yet she was not tired.

When school reopened in September 1906 she addressed the assembly of teachers and pupils as usual on the first day of the new term, speaking to them on the parable of the Talents. A month later she gave her last Scripture lesson; she told her teachers that she must leave them for two or three weeks, but that she would not be very far away. She was at pains to leave every detail of work in completest order, lingering over the last moments in school. 'I gave all my lessons as usual, and corrected all my exercises until the evening of Monday. Whatever my work was, I did it.' She had said before she left the college that perhaps she might not return. A week later, from her sickbed, she dictated an account of these last days, knowing now that she would never come back. In wild November weather, a fortnight later, the news of her death came to the teachers and pupils, but, with her heroic example before them, they carried on work as usual. The college was closed only on the day of her funeral, November 16th, 1906. A resting-place in Gloucester Cathedral was offered by the Dean and Chapter, and there the ashes of Dorothea Beale were reverently laid. Through the rain which falls, as the old belief was, in blessing on a new made grave, the many hundreds gathered who had come to do their last service, and to give thanks for that unwearied spirit, 'zealous, beneficent, firm.' Many distinguished persons were there,

but more impressive was the great crowd of women (many no longer young) who had been her pupils: eight hundred girls, who were at the college at the time, came in grave procession from the station, walking two and two. They had come by their own wish, and the sight of all those fresh young faces touched with the sorrow and solemnity of the moment was one full of significance and pathos. Memorial services were held in churches in other places: most notable was that in St. Paul's Cathedral, where, under the vast soaring roof, a large assembly had gathered to commemorate this woman who had brought to the doing of her life-work such rare and great qualities. Few women have been so honoured; few have earned such remembrance. For Dorothea Beale belonged to that lofty company—the founders of new orders, the pioneers of a new way—those who, in the hour of need,

> '. . . like angels, appear,
> Radiant with ardour divine.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Languor is not in their heart,
> Weakness is not in their word,
> Weariness not on their brow.'

To draw comparisons between Mrs. Booth and herself would be unprofitable, for the two women, both endowed with such great mental and spiritual force, looked at life from very different angles. Where the one held the lamp of Knowledge to trace the Presence of God in all He has made, the other saw a world lying in sin and wickedness. But the quickening spirit which moved them in such different directions and by such widely differing methods came from the same source, to make dead things live again. Their separate spheres met in their fellowship with Mrs.

Josephine Butler, who was the friend of both of them. What the womanhood of the future will owe to the powers, the devotion, the *passion* of these great women of the Victorian time can be measured in some degree by the awakening of women in our day. But we are only at the beginning, and we do well to remember that they were builders, not for time only, but for eternity. On the memorial tablet placed in Cheltenham College, 'in loving thankful remembrance of Dorothea Beale,' within the emblem-border of daisies is inscribed a sentence of her most characteristic teaching :—

> 'Do not think of this life as discontinuous with the Eternal. God has arranged the work you have to do on earth in relation to that fuller life which you are meant to live when the symbols of earth are replaced by the realities of the Eternal World.'

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So the procession passes, of figures shining with brave and womanly virtues—clemency, courage and faith. We look back through the long centuries, and see them—each holding in her hand a torch. At these torches we may kindle our humble tapers, and the light they cast shows us a few of the toilsome steps which the generations have taken in their slow march

> 'On, to the bound of the waste,
> On, to the City of God.'

'Necessity is laid upon me,' Saint Paul said, and surely, when we recall the stories of those noble women, we recognise in their lives—though the secret of personality may still evade us—the same driving

power, and the persistence and sureness of aim which are at once the gift and the sign of genius. We see, throughout, the expression of that divinely imperious impulse in 'the perseverance of the saints,' in the artist's unwearied, indomitable pursuit of truth and of beauty, in the dutifulness and heroism of queens, in the 'cheerful undertaking of hard things' for love's sake, and in the ardour which led women into new fields of service and knowledge and sacrifice.

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